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The National Trails System
A Grand Experiment

Cover: Register Cliff State Historic Site, west of Fort Laramie, Wyoming, shows where thousands of westering pioneers left their signatures and graffiti on sandstone cliffs. Photo: NPS.

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The National Trails System
A Grand Experiment

by Steven Elkinton

Researched and co-written by Linnea Caproni and Janelle Hoeflschweiger

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November 8, 2008

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Hikers enjoy one of the most photographed overlooks along the Appalachian NST, McKaffee Knob in Virginia. Photo: Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

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Old Man's Cave in Hocking Hills State Park, Ohio begins the Grandma Gatewood Trail's six-mile course. This trail has been designated a part of Ohio's Buckeye Trail as well as two national trails — the North Country Scenic Trail and America's Discovery Trail. Photo: North Country Trail Association.

Preface

Where Trails Lead: Our Heritage

By Stewart Udall
Former U.S. Secretary
of the Interior
from the *Albuquerque Journal,* Dec. 31, 2007

Eighty years ago, when I was a boy growing up on a ranch near St. Johns, Arizona, trails formed the contours of my world. I'd take a trail to get to a neighbor's house or follow one along the river if I were looking for stray cattle. Trails were the most practical way of getting around in those days. But they were also irresistible to me. I'd walk a trail just to see where it led.

As we near the 40th anniversary of the National Trails System Act, I look out on a footpath that leads past my house into the mountains and think about the age-old pull of America's trails — the ones that led through the Cumberland Gap and over the Continental Divide, across the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada.

One of the greatest overland migrations in history followed a trail. During the mid-1800s nearly 400,000 emigrants walked or rode over the Platte River Road, the dusty thoroughfare formed by the convergence of the Oregon, California and Mormon trails. The first drafts of American history are recorded in the diaries of the people who followed frontier trails. They also can be read in the crude inscriptions and epitaphs scrawled on rocks and grave markers along the way.

Much of that history would have passed into oblivion, ploughed under or paved over, were it not for the National Trails legislation signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968. The idea behind the National Trails System Act was to ensure the survival of our historic corridors. Those of us who endorsed the legislation wanted to make it possible for Americans to share some of the adventure, the toil, and even a bit of the danger experienced by our forebears — the native people, explorers and pioneers who first laid eyes on the American scene.

Today, the National Trails System encompasses more than 40,000 miles of trails. They extend from Maine's Mount Katahdin, where the Appalachian National Scenic Trail begins, to Nome, Alaska, where the Iditarod Trail ends. Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail traces the southern terminus of the last continental glacier to push down over North America. The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail follows the route taken by some 16,000 Cherokee when they were driven from their ancestral home in southern Appalachia in 1838 and forcibly relocated in Oklahoma's Indian Territory.

Mount Katahdin, Maine, the northern start of the Appalachian Trail. Photo: National Scenic Byways. www.byways.org

The longest trails celebrate the American outdoors. The 2,150-mile Appalachian Trail, started in the 1920s, was the first. It was followed by the slightly longer Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, from Canada to Mexico, and more recently by the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail that winds more than 3,000 miles from the crown of Glacier National Park in northern Montana to the aptly named Hatchet Mountains at the southwestern tip of New Mexico. Traveling on foot or horseback down any one of those trails provides an intense exposure to a world that would otherwise be accessible only in history books and atlases.

Unfortunately, the National Trails System Act did not include a budget for completing all of the trails or preserving their historic environs. Instead, the trail system has relied heavily on the contributions and hard work of volunteers. By the year 2,000, volunteers had put in more than a half-million hours building, maintaining and protecting the trails.

Over the years Congress has appropriated some funds to help complete work on the trails. But there is so much more to do fill all of the gaps, including a 45-mile stretch of the Continental Divide Trail in New Mexico that would allow hikers to walk the same terrain that the Spanish explorer Coronado passed over in 1540.

The future of our trail system will continue to depend on the generosity of private land owners as well as the continuing efforts of volunteers. Supporting our national trails is more than an exercise in nostalgia. Think of how much richer a child's knowledge of history might be after a few days spent along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Imagine how a student's grasp of our constitutional liberties might benefit from a drive along the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, where civil rights marchers braved billy clubs and tear gas in 1965 to campaign for voting rights for African American citizens.

As I sit in my home in Santa Fe, I think of the significance of one of our most storied frontier trails. In 1846, Col. Stephen Watts Kearney led his Army of the West down the Santa Fe Trail to claim New Mexico territory and later California for the United States. The annexation of those lands marked the triumph of Manifest Destiny, the idea held by many at the time that America was destined by divine providence to expand its dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

A national trail is indeed a portal to the past. But it is also an inroad to our national character. It tells us how we got where we are. Our trails are both irresistible and indispensable. And while I may not be hiking the Continental Divide Trail from Canada to Mexico any time soon, I am doing everything I can to help with the monumental task of completing it.

It is up to all of us who care so deeply for the future of this great country to join in this uniquely American undertaking of building, maintaining and protecting these unique treasures. I hope you will join me, for the sake of the generations to come.

- Stewart Udall

Stewart Udall represented Arizona in the U.S. House from 1953 until President Kennedy appointed him Secretary of Interior in 1961.

Introduction

The establishment of a nationwide system of trails will be an accomplishment worthy of a place beside other major conservation programs. . . The fundamental objective of a nationwide system of trails is to provide simple, inexpensive recreation opportunities for all people by having an abundance of trails for walking, cycling, and horseback riding near home, as well as providing some major historic and scenic interstate trails of national significance.[1]

The National Trails System Act of 1968 provides millions of people with opportunities to experience our Nation's past while enjoying its unsullied natural beauty. Set in motion by various Federal and State agencies and a handful of citizen volunteers, the 1968 Act today identifies and preserves trails of outstanding scenic, historic and recreational value across America.

These national trails offer recreational benefits that improve health, boost energy and lift the spirits of the work-weary. They also allow public access to landscapes that reflect the rich cultural and natural diversity of our national heritage. Ultimately, as a conservation and recreation effort, national trails embody the visions and struggles of a network of individuals dedicated to preserving these remarkable routes for the enjoyment of future generations.

The original National Trails System Act of 1968 established three types of trails: national scenic trails (NSTs), national recreation trails (NRTs), and connecting and side trails. The category of national historic trails (NHTs) was added in 1978.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and National Park Service (NPS) staff gather at Parting of the Ways in Wyoming where the California and Oregon NHTs split going West. Photo: NPS.

Both seasoned and amateur hikers enjoy the superb vistas and the wilderness experiences available along national scenic trails (NSTs). History buffs enjoy following the routes traversed in the past by indigenous peoples, explorers, and pioneers — many marked as national historic trails (NHTs). Such trails provide excellent opportunities to experience both the natural and cultural heritage of the United States.

NSTs and NHTs differ somewhat in scope and purpose. The authors of the National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543 as amended) intended the design and location of an NST to "provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass."[2] The routes of NSTs are therefore usually planned, designed, and constructed to be continuous and recreational.

On the other hand, NHTs — added in 1978 — attempt to follow as closely as possible original historic trails or travel routes of national historic significance. Their intent is to identify and protect the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.[3] Public use of NHTs is envisioned in the Act to be primarily along the lines of historic interpretation and appreciation, rather than recreational hiking along a footpath like NSTs. Due to land use changes and subsequent development (or in some cases, lack thereof), NHTs are often fragmented and located on both public and private properties.

National Recreation Trails (NRTs) are shorter trails — some close to metropolitan areas. Most are located in Federal and State parks, forests, and recreation areas. NRTs often offer a means to temporarily escape the bustle of urban life. NRT designations have multiplied over the years, aided by a fairly easy designation process which, unlike NST and NHT

A modern day covered wagon rests along the Oregon NHT in the Blue Mountains of Oregon. Photo: NPS.

designation, does not require acts of Congress, but just the signature of the Secretary of the Interior (or in the case of Forest Service trails, the regional forester). Although NRTs have played a key role in the National Trails System since 1968, their purpose and roles differ from that of the NSTs and NHTs which are the major focus of this history.

The Appalachian NST in the East and the Pacific Crest NST in the West were the first two long-distance trails to receive national trail designation in 1968. Today, the National Trails System boasts eight NSTs, 18 NHTs, two connecting (or side) trails, and more than 1,050 NRTs. The NSTs and NHTs alone total more than 46,000 miles in combined lengths and are administered by either the Department of the Interior (the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management) or the Department of Agriculture (the USDA Forest Service).[4]

The National Trails System has been an experiment in democratic principles. Crafted alongside other significant environmental and social legislation of the 1960s, this movement reflects deep American impulses, such as love of outdoor recreation, devotion to iconic trail experiences (such as hiking the Appalachian Trail or retracing the ruts of pioneer wagons), volunteerism, and reverence for the struggles that early American explorers and pioneers endured. In operation, it is a balanced system that seeks to honor private property rights while still securing access to America's landscapes for public benefit.

This experiment was not a sure bet. Early cost estimates were low by magnitudes, and no one could predict how many trails would be enough to make an actual system. Yet somehow, in the 40 years since the law's passage in 1968, this disparate collection of trails has begun to coalesce into a true system. The story of this experiment is a story of American democracy at work.

Picturesque segment of the Natchez Trace NST. Photo: NPS/ Natchez Trace Parkway.

The Roots of the National Trails System

The dynamic interplay of linear and area conservation cannot be underestimated. Ideally, the only permanent sign of man in wilderness is the trail that marks his travels . . . In a real sense, "trail country" is another term for wilderness. As important as is the highway in determining circulation and development patterns of the city, the trail forms the outdoorsman's relationship to the back country [5]

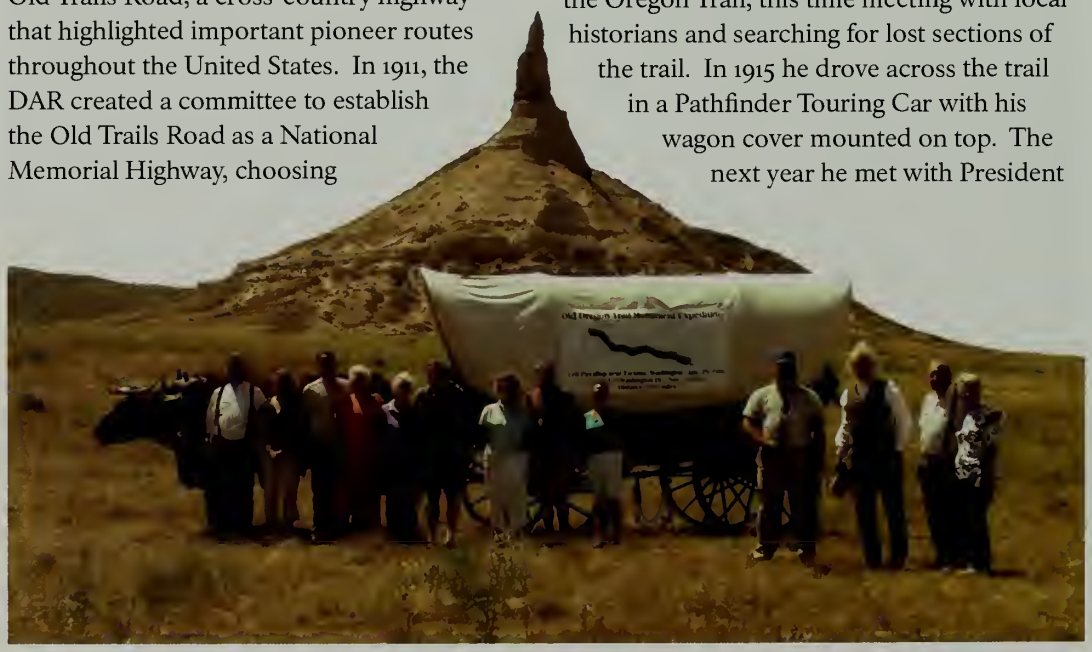
The Madonna of the Trails, installed by the DAR in Springfield, Ohio, in 1928. Sculpted by August Leimbach. Photo: Dick Klein.

During the 20th Century, citizens requested conservation action and the United States Congress responded by passing laws promoting the protection and preservation of both natural and historic resources. One early piece of conservation, the Antiquities Act of 1906, authorized national monuments and the preservation of such treasured archeological sites as Mesa Verde. Meanwhile, the Forest Service and the National Park Service — both established as Federal agencies in 1905 and 1916, respectively — developed expertise in natural and cultural landscape stewardship. And private groups, such as the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Sierra Club, were established to rescue lands and resources from burgeoning industrial growth. This rise in resource stewardship also included memorializing historic routes.

As early as 1906 a committee of women from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) set out to mark the Santa Fe Trail in Missouri, using polished granite monuments to designate the old trail route. Eventually, this concept sparked the idea for the National Old Trails Road, a cross-country highway that highlighted important pioneer routes throughout the United States. In 1911, the DAR created a committee to establish the Old Trails Road as a National Memorial Highway, choosing again to erect trail markers along its historic routes. The most notable of these markers remain the Madonnas of the Trail, which feature a young mother exhibiting the grace and determination necessary for survival on pioneer trails. The DAR installed twelve of the Madonnas on historic routes in the late 1920s.[6]

Ezra Meeker — an American pioneer who had gone west in a covered wagon as a child — wanted to commemorate the overland trails, especially the Oregon Trail. In 1906, then retired and white haired, Meeker retraced the Oregon Trail from west to east in a reconstructed covered wagon pulled by oxen, erecting trail markers along the way. After completing the trail in Missouri, Meeker took the wagon farther east to New York City and Washington, D.C. There he met with President Theodore Roosevelt, and encouraged Congress to pass a bill authorizing $50,000 for marking the Oregon Trail. Though the bill failed to pass, Meeker remained undaunted. He continued to promote historic trail preservation over the next 20 years.

In 1910, Meeker began a second journey across the Oregon Trail, this time meeting with local historians and searching for lost sections of the trail. In 1915 he drove across the trail in a Pathfinder Touring Car with his wagon cover mounted on top. The next year he met with President



In 2006, the Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition retraced the route Ezra Meeker had taken 100 years before commemorating the Oregon Trail. Photo: David Welch/OCTA.

Woodrow Wilson to discuss the idea of a national trail highway. Meeker traveled sections of the Oregon Trail for the last time in 1924 by airplane, before he died in 1928, a few days shy of his 98th birthday. His contributions to trail preservation and awareness inspired other to give increased recognition to historic routes throughout the United States, and eventually led to the establishment of a system of national trails.[7]

Similarly, as early years of the 20th Century marked the centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1903-1906), Olin Wheeler retraced their route and published a two-volume work, *The Trail of Lewis and Clark*, chronicling his travels and the conditions along the route at that time. The first complete, verbatim edition of Lewis and Clark's journals was also published by Reuben Gold Thwaites 100 years after their journey.

During this same time period, the development of trails for recreation emerged. America's first long-distance hiking trail, Vermont's Long Trail, inspired by mountain trails in New England, was conceived by James Taylor and completed in 1910.[8] In 1921, a personal tragedy inspired the concept of The Appalachian Trail. Benton MacKaye — a regional planner and outdoorsman — was a New Englander familiar with the purpose and concept of such hiking trails. Following the suicide of his wife in 1921, his friends encouraged him to find something to which he could devote the next stage of his life. His idea of an eastern mountain-chain trail evoking wilderness values appeared in his seminal article "An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning" in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* (October 1921). The article frames his vision for a backwoods highland footpath from Maine to Georgia, intended to welcome hikers, help preserve a portion of the mountain wilderness, and offset the Nation's growing industrialization.[9]

MacKaye summarized the purpose of the Appalachian Trail with these words:

> *Its ultimate purpose is to conserve, use, and enjoy the mountain hinterland . . . . The Trail (or system of trails) is a means for making the land accessible. The Appalachian Trail is to this Appalachian region what the Pacific Railway was to the Far West — a means of 'opening up' the country. But a very different kind of 'opening up.' Instead of a railway we want a 'trailway'. . .*[10]

MacKaye clearly intended a trail that combined recreation and conservation (wilderness-like) values. One key piece of this visionary, multipurpose "trailway" included the construction, maintenance, and protection of the trail largely by the work of dedicated volunteers. After four years of promotion and planning, MacKaye's idea culminated with the founding of the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC) in 1925.[11] This interstate organization has coordinated the Trail's routing, development, and protection ever since.

Ross Marshall uncovers an original DAR marker along the Santa Fe NHT at Pawnee Rock, Kansas, 2007. Photo: NPS/Andrea Sharon.

MacKaye's dream of the trail serving as a wilderness escape was soon challenged by Myron Avery, then a young Harvard Law School graduate and avid outdoorsman. Shortly after MacKaye helped organize the Appalachian Trail Conference, Avery became the ATC's forceful chairman, serving from 1930 to 1952. His view of the trail as a user-friendly footpath for all hikers differed fundamentally from MacKaye's wilderness escape approach. These differences created tension between the two men and within the ATC, culminating in the 1930s in bitter arguments over the proposed Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park and how it might displace the Trail. This dynamic tension between idealistic vision and pragmatic action has helped make the Appalachian Trail the success it is today.[12]

Benton MacKaye looks out over the Great Smoky mountains, ~ 1934. Photo: ATC.

ATC's Myron Avery checks trail lengths along the Appalachian Trail. Photo: ATC.

A wilderness trail is only as good as the land surrounding it. Recognizing this, Avery and the ATC forged some of the first trail protection and operations agreements between a private organization and Federal agencies. In 1938, the ATC signed agreements with the National Park Service and the Forest Service to create a protective buffer zone along the Appalachian Trail. The agreements defined a two-mile wide strip surrounding the path that would protect the Trail from disruptive development and industrialization, with a 200-foot inner corridor where timbering was to be minimized. The buffer zone would therefore help evoke a wilderness setting wherever possible.[13]

Trail plans also developed in the West. Washington State school teacher Catherine Montgomery envisioned a mountain hiking trail from Canada to Mexico. Inspired by both the Appalachian Trail and Ms. Montgomery's vision, Clinton C. Clarke, a consummate Boy Scout, Harvard graduate, and successful oilman, organized the Pacific Crest Trail Conference (PCTC) in 1932. Clarke intended the PCTC to plan and develop a rugged backcountry trail along the slopes of the Sierra and Cascade mountain ranges from the Mexican to the Canadian borders, stringing together several well-known high-elevation trails, such as Oregon's Skyline Trail and the John Muir Trail in California. He involved PCTC members, the Boy Scouts, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), and even young photographer Ansel Adams. During the summers of 1935 to 1938, Clarke organized YMCA-PCTC relay hikes that featured 40 teams of young hikers between the ages of 14 and 18.

These relay hikes were directed by Warren Rogers who guided teams to scout an optimal route for the Trail. They carried a log book from Campo on the Mexican border north to the Canadian border. Rogers, who later worked extensively with Clarke on developing the trail, followed him as PCTC executive secretary, working tirelessly to organize support for the Trail even past Clarke's death in 1957.[14] As the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trails developed, public and private groups were weaving additional threads that set the context for the future National Trails System Act.

In 1935, Bob Marshall organized the Wilderness Society around the concept that wilderness values are essential to American character. Its mission focused on the preservation and protection of areas of untrammeled wild beauty that contribute to the essential American character. Joining Marshall on the first board were conservation luminaries such as Aldo Leopold, Olaus and Mardy Murie, Benton MacKaye, and Howard "Zannie" Zahniser.[15]

The Wilderness Society's establishment responded to two national developments that

The Civilian Conservation Corps, one of the most popular of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs, put unemployed young men to work in parks and forests around the nation.

The "CCC Boys" improved the newly completed Appalachian Trail; they had to move about 35 miles of the trail to make way for Skyline Drive. The boys built overlooks, stonewalls, and guardrails; they cleared trails, built campgrounds and picnic areas, and fought occasional forest fires. Photo: NPS.

threatened areas of wilderness every day: urban growth (as towns and cities grew to accommodate burgeoning industry) and timbering (which removed the irreplaceable remnant virgin forests). Bob Marshall intended the Wilderness Society to help provide strong wilderness protection measures to counteract such damaging national developments. The Society was instrumental in the eventual passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Another thread in the tapestry for the future National Trails System Act was the 1922 establishment of the Izaak Walton League (IWL). Named after the 17th Century British author of *The Compleat Angler*,[16] the IWL's purpose was to preserve the landscape for future generations of Americans. It actively participates in conservation and in educating the public about respecting natural resources and the environment. The IWL also played a role in shaping mid-20th Century Federal conservation and recreation policies. Its conservation director during the 1950s, Joe Penfold, is credited with the idea for the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, also known as "ORRRC." This Federally-appointed commission, established in 1958 and chaired by Laurance S. Rockefeller, a wealthy philanthropist, paved the way for much of the United States' environmental, recreational, and conservation legislation for the next 40 years.[17]

Philanthropy by wealthy donors was yet another thread, and one that was especially instrumental in the land conservation movement. Many family foundations promoted social welfare and physical fitness. And certain foundations feared that if the natural environment and the heritage of the outdoors did not become a priority, they would be lost forever. Families such as the Rockefellers and the Harrimans (a New York City-based family of railroad executives that donated ten thousand acres to New York State for Harriman State Park in 1910),[18] acquired significant pieces of the American landscape in hopes of preserving its beauty for future generations to enjoy.

These philanthropic activities influenced Federal conservation policy in the late 1950s and certainly influenced — along with the Izaak Walton League — the authorization of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission in 1958.

The main charge of the ORRRC under the Eisenhower Administration was to examine the recreation trends in the United States and the recreational opportunities available to all Americans. The commission based its examination on three fundamental inquiries:

- What are the recreation needs of the United States in 1960, in 1975 and in 2000?
- What are the recreation sources in the United States available to fill those needs?
- What policies and procedures should be recommended to ensure that these present and future needs are met?

The findings resulted in the January, 1962, report entitled *Outdoor Recreation for America*. The result of extensive research and public surveys, the report outlined the many types of outdoor recreation interests then pursued by Americans based on age and socio-economic factors. It predicted a substantive increase over the next few decades of multiple types of outdoor recreation, including walking for pleasure. To better serve the public and their recreational needs, the ORRRC report prescribed the creation of a bureau responsible for implementing and developing outdoor recreation resources in the United States.[19]

Based on these findings, President John F. Kennedy called for the creation of such a bureau, and in April 1962, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall established the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) by secretarial order. In a message to Congress earlier that year, President Kennedy stated that this new bureau would "serve as the focal point within the Federal Government for the many activities related to outdoor recreation." [20] Directed by Edward C. Crafts — former Assistant Chief of the Forest Service — BOR coordinated and supported the provision of increased recreational opportunities and facilities throughout the United States. Although John Kennedy, one of the new bureau's primary supporters, was tragically assassinated a few months later, the new administration under Lyndon B. Johnson continued to support its mission.

In particular, the efforts of First Lady "Lady Bird" Johnson, an avid outdoorswoman and wildflower enthusiast, complemented the goals of the new Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. A *Washington Post* staff writer verified Lady Bird's love of the outdoors in a 1967 article:

Warren Rogers sporting his own homemade backpack. Undated. Photo: Pacific Crest Trail Association.

"Lady Bird" Johnson, 1964. Photo: jfklibrary.org

She reacts to our national parks and forests with genuine pleasure and has said: 'How wonderful it is to be able to get so completely out in the wilderness away from towns and cities' ... Blazing new paths ... being fascinated by exotic new plants, her pleasure is an inspiration for all women.[21]

Her pleasure in the outdoors included her husband, President Johnson. In fact, often upon returning from Texas or campaigning, they would take the time to sit on the Potomac River shoreline at twilight and admire the skyline of the Nation's Capital.

However, the large billboards and scrubby landscapes around the Nation's highways and tourist attractions were things Lady Bird definitely did not admire. Early in the Johnson administration, the First Lady began a highway beautification campaign that would lead to the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. Lady Bird raised both public and private funds to clean up the landscape and plant flowers and trees along the roadsides and in parks, beginning in the National Capital Region and then around the entire country. She believed that beauty could improve the mental health of society.

Rachel Carson, 1944. Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The concept of beautifying America was a lofty goal for 1960s America. It was a time of social and political ferment as the Civil Rights movement reached a fevered pitch and the Vietnam War grew in scope. However, there was also a deepening public concern about America's natural environment, launched by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 — and strengthened later by the first Earth Day in 1970. This era saw significant legislation passed that focused on the environment and outdoor recreation, including, the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963, the Wilderness Act of 1964, and the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965.

During this restless time, various people and organizations helped raise public awareness about different types of trails for recreational, historic and conservation purposes. Of note, celebrated political cartoonist and conservationist "Ding" Darling proposed that the Missouri River be part of "a national outdoor recreation and natural resources ribbon along the historic trail of Lewis and Clark." His idea is still considered the forerunner of the future Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.[22]

Slowly, as these trails garnered more public attention nationally, legislative actions followed.

As far back as February, 1945, the first Federal trails-related bill had been introduced by Rep. Daniel Hoch (D-PA), an ATC board member and long-time leader of Pennsylvania's Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club. This House legislation proposed an amendment to the Federal Highway Act of 1944, that would establish a national system of foot trails for administration by the USDA Forest Service. The bill, called the "Hoch bill," named the Appalachian Trail as the first path for designation in the system and recommended a trails system of approximately 10,000 miles — with development and maintenance of these trails intended to help preserve the wilderness values of the trail areas. Though a House hearing was held, the bill never became law. [23]

Two decades later, another attempt to secure Federal recognition and protection for trails occurred. In 1965, Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-WI), former Wisconsin governor and longtime friend to environmental and conservation concerns, introduced two trails bills in the Senate. The first bill proposed Federal recognition and protection for the Appalachian Trail. The second proposed a national system of hiking trails on lands of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture.[24] Neither bill went far in Congress. However, Senator Nelson perservered.

President Johnson's "Beautification Speech," in May, 1965, accomplished what previous legislation failed to do. In his *Special Message to Congress on Conservation and Restoration of Natural Beauty*, delivered before the White House Conference on Natural Beauty, Johnson crystallized his administration's view of environmental and conservation concerns, touching on pollution, clean water and the natural landscape. Of trails, he said:

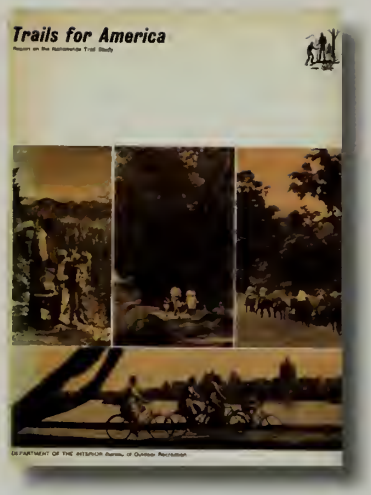
The forgotten outdoorsmen of today are those who like to walk, hike, ride horseback, or bicycle. For them we must have trails as well as highways ... I am requesting therefore, that the Secretary of the Interior work with his colleagues in the federal government and with state and local leaders and recommend to me a cooperative program to encourage a national system of trails, building up the more than [one] hundred thousand miles of trails in our National

Forests and Parks ... In the backcountry we need to copy the great Appalachian Trail in all parts of our country ... [25]

This excerpt summarizes a few key ideas about trails that resonate throughout the history of the trails system in the United States: the emphasis on non-motorized routes; cooperation between citizens and the government; interagency coordination; the usage of existing trails on Federal lands for a national trails system; the health values of trails (especially in urban areas); and the inspiring model of the Appalachian Trail.

Johnson's speech sparked a seminal study — the first major nationwide Federal study solely about trails. *Trails for America*, released in 1966, became the final thread in the tapestry that was to become the National Trails System Act. The study was completed in just 18 months by staff of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management (Department of the Interior), and the Forest Service (Department of Agriculture). Each agency polled their field offices to come up with ideas for trails that could be featured in this collaborative effort.

The report focused on the recreational opportunities that trails provide to the public. It found that trails are inexpensive and available to all, and can be found anywhere in metropolitan, suburban, and rural environments. The study recommended three types of trails for further development: National Scenic Trails that would capture the nation's unique beauty for future generations; Park and Forest Trails, to make use of the trails that traverse the miles of National Forest and Park land and develop them to their full recreational potential; and finally, Metropolitan Trail Systems. *Trails for America* stated that the most urgent need for trails was in and near metropolitan areas. This reflected the suffering that major cities such as Detroit and Los Angeles had then recently experienced in the form of devastating urban riots, as well as medical studies that indicated outdoor recreation could relieve mental stress. The report continued to say that trail systems should be included as an integral part of broader outdoor recreation planning and general urban planning, to offset health hazards endemic to metropolitan life. The report also proposed the first national trails — the Appalachian, Pacific Crest, Potomac Heritage, and Continental Divide National Scenic Trails — and recommended many others for further study, including the Lewis and Clark, Oregon, North Country, Natchez Trace, and Santa Fe Trails. In short, *Trails for America* laid a firm foundation for the National Trails System Act .[26]



The front cover of *Trails for America*, published in 1966. NPS.

Interior Secretary Udall and President Johnson contemplate a map of the proposed National Trails System in the White House East Room, October 2, 1968, just before the President signed the National Trails System Act. Photo: LBJ Library, Austin, Texas.

The Legal Foundation of the National Trails System

This is one of the most attractive proposals which has been developed in recent years during the great resurgence of interest in natural outdoor recreation throughout the nation. Foot and horse trails offer the best opportunities for large numbers of people to escape the pressures of mechanized urban life and to enjoy the finest kind of healthful outdoor recreation in unspoiled natural environments.[27]

Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson chairing an Interior Committee hearing in Washington, D.C., ~ 1960s. Photo: University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, HMJ0622.

The "National Hiking Trails Bill" was transmitted to Congress by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall upon completion of *Trails for America* in 1966. An article in the *Washington Post* claimed the bill held nationwide appeal, and stated:

> *"These paths are part of our historic as well as scenic heritage. They will doubtless be highly prized by future generations as well as our own."*[28]

Secretary Udall transmitted the bill to both houses of Congress in early 1967 entitled "Nationwide System of Trails Act." Several congressional members immediately championed it. These were, most notably, Wisconsin's Senator Gaylord Nelson and Washington's Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson.

Personal connections to trails and landscapes by high-level officials helped create the nationwide system of trails. First, the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation — chaired by Roy A. Taylor (D-NC) — considered the national trails system bill. During two days of hearings held March 6-7, 1967, Rep. Taylor admitted that he favored the bill, as he had grown up in the mountains of North Carolina where trails were an important part of his life. The proceedings were closely watched by Chairman of the full House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Wayne Aspinall (D-CO).

The House heard from 28 witnesses and received 52 letters. Most were highly supportive — even the few opponents were more skeptical than fully against this new national system of trails. As the hearings progressed, various House members recommended additional trails for future study. Some sympathized with wilderness interests, while others sought urban recreational opportunities. Several witnesses complained that they had only a very short time (10 days) to prepare for this major issue before it moved on to the Senate. The numerous and complex topics addressed in the hearing reflected the incredible undertaking they tackled: land protection, funding, maintenance, crime potential, liability, motorized trail uses, trail width, easements, and magnitudes of use, shelters, fencing and relocations, among other issues.[29]

Then the Senate Subcomittee held hearings ten days later, March 15-16, where no outright opposition was evident. During the two full days of hearings in the Senate several participants (including three senators) testified or submitted letters of support, with only a handful expressing skepticism or suggesting major revisions. As Subcommittee Chairman Scoop Jackson was not present, Senator Frank Moss (D-UT), opened the hearing (advocating inclusion of the Mormon Trail) and Senator Nelson presided over most of the sessions. The Senate hearing panels discussed many issues: advisory councils, state and local interests, water trails, international connections, use of eminent domain (especially on the proposed east-west historic trails), costs and funding, fire danger, corridor width, number of users, trespassing and littering, youth corps, effects on timbering, flexibility, and local control.[30]

These hearings endure as some of the major foundation stones of the National Trails System. Concepts that arose in the hearings and that have shaped the National Trails System ever since include the importance of volunteers, the balance of public benefit and private property rights, the possibility of including routes of history, and the diversity of trail possibilities found throughout the Nation. By embarking on a system nationwide in extent, a wide range of senators and representatives could support the bills, giving them the bipartisan support they needed to get passed. Leg-

islators' support of the System was particularly useful when they became personally involved by advocating the addition of a particular trail. Texas Representative Joe R. Pool (D-TX) provided such an example with his suggestion to add the Chisholm Trail.[31]

The language of the National Trails System Act (NTSA) bill was important to committee members. After the hearings, a conference committee met September 9-10, 1968, to iron out final wording, largely following a House Committee outline. Of note, the category of "Park, Forest, and Other Recreation Trails" was consolidated into "National Recreation Trails." They recommended only the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trails for initial establishment as the first national scenic trails — the others proposed for establishment (Continental Divide and Potomac Heritage) had too many controversies still needing to be settled. The final language limited Federal land acquisition by eminent domain to 25 acres per mile. Funds for land acquisition for the two proposed NSTs were limited to $5.5 million.[32]

After these deliberations and other delays, and just two years after the release of *Trails for America*, both houses passed the National Trails System Act (in the House 378 to 18; and in the Senate by unanimous consent). President Lyndon Johnson signed it into law on October 2, 1968, in the East Room of the White House.

Ultimately, the 1968 Trails Act designated three types of trails: National Recreation Trails (NRTs), National Scenic Trails (NSTs), and connecting-and-side trails. This act established the Appalachian and Pacific Crest Trails as the first two NSTs, creating a geographic and administrative balance. One is an eastern trail administered by the National Park Service; the other as a western trail under the USDA Forest Service. Such interagency balance still plays a major role in the Trails System.

The Act also requested that 14 additional routes be studied for later inclusion as potential NSTs in the System: Continental Divide, Potomac Heritage, Old Cattle Trails (including the Chisholm Trail), Lewis and Clark, Natchez Trace, North Country, Kittanning, Oregon, Santa Fe, Long, Mormon, Gold Rush, Mormon Battalion and El Camino Real Trails.

Remarkably, at that time there were no national trail organizations as there are today. The entire constituent advocacy to establish a national system of trails was carried out by individuals or organizations with other formal agendas, such as the Sierra Club. While champions of the trails system saw their goals framed at the national level, they were not yet organized at a national scale.

President Johnson signs the National Trails System Act into law on October 2, 1968. Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, Lady Bird Johnson, and other high-level officials look on. Photo: LBJ Library, Austin, Texas.

The year 1968 was remarkable in many respects with contentious presidential elections marking a troubled climax to the infamous 1960s. Seldom had there been such a convergence of social unrest in one year of American history: the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, escalation of the unpopular War in Vietnam, urban riots, student unrest worldwide, draft resistance, the appearance of *60 Minutes*, election of the first black woman to the U.S. Congress, and the first human satellite orbit of the moon. The National Trails System was born in the midst of these troubled times with the hope that it could bring balm and inspiration to future generations.

The Appalachian NST as it enters the south end of Shenandoah National Park, Virginia, 2007. Photo: NPS.

Monty "Warner Springs Monty" Tam at the northern terminus of the Pacific Crest NST at the completion of his thru-hike on Sept. 22, 2007. Photo: Joe "Samurai Joe" Valesco/Pacific Crest Trail Association.

Appalachian NST

The Appalachian NST is a 2,175-mile, 250,000-acre greenway extending from Maine to Georgia. Based on the inspiring vision of Benton MacKaye, this trail was first completed in 1938, although through-hikers the entire route were uncommon until the 1960s. One key leader, Myron Avery, a Federal admiralty lawyer and chairman of the Appalachian Trail Conference from 1930 to 1952, was able to attract and organize many people to the "AT" cause. The Appalachian Trail Conference, founded in 1925, is known today as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). It works to maintain, protect and educate people about the Trail. Its volunteers work in every season to maintain trail tread, stonework, blazes, and signs. The trail is administered by the National Park Service in close coordination with the USDA Forest Service.

Pacific Crest NST

The Pacific Crest NST has the greatest elevation changes of any of the NSTs and contains other extremes of landscape and climate, from the hot and arid Mojave Desert into the subzero alpine slopes of the Sierra Nevada. Organized by Californian Clinton C. Clarke in the mid 1930s, this trail runs 2,650 miles between the Mexican and Canadian-U.S. borders through California, Oregon and Washington. In the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks the trail runs along the western slopes of 14,494-foot high Mount Whitney. The PCT links together 25 national forests, six National Park Service units, and numerous state parks. It is administered by the USDA Forest Service in close partnership with the Pacific West Trail Association and offers unparalleled mountain landscapes, canyons, lakes, and fascinating wildlife.[33]

Senator Jackson and Representative Aspinall, chairmen respectively of the Senate and House Interior committees, and their numerous colleagues who have worked hard on these bills have written a highly creditable chapter in the history of conservation in America.[34]

Establishing a system of trails is not easy. Administratively, it involves Federal, State and private areas, as well as a number of different Federal agencies. The authors of the legislation are to be commended in this undertaking . . .[35]

With the Presidential elections of 1968, the Nation shifted; Richard Nixon followed Lyndon Johnson. Issues important in the 1960s faded as new priorities arose. Early in his second term, the rising tide of Nixon's Watergate scandal in the early 1970s paralyzed much of the Federal Government.

Despite this turmoil, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) quickly moved to make the newly passed National Trails System Act (NTSA) operational. Delegations of authority were proposed and letters crafted for Secretary of the Interior Udall to send to all state governors. In one of these letters he wrote:

> *The Act, a copy of which is enclosed, encourages States to assume the leadership role in operating, developing, and maintaining portions of the National Scenic Trails (Appalachian and Pacific Crest) and also to acquire lands for utilization as segment of these trails . . . The legislation offers your State the opportunity to assume a lead role in this challenging trails program.*[36]

BOR parceled out the 14 requested trail studies among its regional offices. Early on, staff members were busily put to work developing a standard format so that there would be consistency among these studies. In 1969, Walter Hickel, the new Secretary of the Interior, and Clifford Hardin, recently-appointed Secretary of Agriculture, established an Interagency Trails Task Force to help coordinate trails work and policy among different Federal agencies with trail responsibilities. For its first 11 years, A. Heaton Underhill, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, chaired this new Interagency Trails Task Force.

The Secretaries charged the Interagency Trails Task Force to develop:

- Procedures for the studies of routes identified in Section 5 of the Act as well as studies of other trails to determine feasibility,
- Uniform markers for the National Trails System including standards for their maintenance and installation along trails,
- Criteria and standards for selection of trail location,

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development George Romney, President Richard M. Nixon, Secretary of Agriculture Clifford Hardin in a cabinet meeting, June 1969. Photo: Jack Kightlinger/National Archives.

The St. Charles Men historic re-enactors — complete with Indian guests — approach their home landing after three years exploring the Lewis and Clark NHT, September 22, 2006. Photo: Steven Elkinton/NPS.

- Regulations governing use, protection, management, development and administration of national trails,
- Uniform regulations for governing conduct on and along trails,
- Procedures for identification and designation of National Recreation Trails (NRTs), and
- Recommendations to the respective secretaries as needed.

Criteria for additional trails, guidelines for trail studies, trail markers, and interagency coordination were the first issues addressed. In September, 1969, Under Secretary of the Interior Russell E. Train issued the first Federal policy statements about the National Trails System.[37] Train would become an invaluable player in the development of the trails system. He was the president of the Conservation Foundation (1965-1969), the soon-to-be Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality (1970-1973) under Nixon, the second administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (1973-1977), and later president of the World Wildlife Fund. The preservation goals of the National Trails System certainly matched his personal and career aspirations.[38]

Americans wanted trails for both enjoying the beauty of nature and retracing the footsteps of their ancestors but this would be no easy task. While conducting the required trail studies, it soon became clear that establishing continuous hiking trails, like the Appalachian and Pacific Crest, along historic routes of our Nation would be extremely challenging, often because of their continued use and development as modern transportation corridors.

Preliminary determinations by the teams studying many of the proposed historic routes recommended against their establishment as NSTs. However, because the historic routes — such as the Lewis and Clark and Santa Fe Trails — were very popular with the public and local communities, recommendations for no Federal action to protect these routes were unpalatable to trail supporters. These routes were too important to the history of our Nation to be cast aside. It became clear to the Interagency Trails Task Force that an additional type of trail designation fitting the particular issues and circumstances of historic routes would be needed.

This movement to commemorate historic routes was not new. Its roots go back to Ezra Meeker, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Lewis and Clark Tourway Association. Even Trails for America reflected strong popular interest in an historic trail category.

The concept of historic trails was a difficult one and the Interagency Trails Task Force continued to wrestle with this and other issues presented by the Secretaries throughout much of the 1970s. Members felt such trails must be both nationally significant and viable as recreation corridors for inclusion in the National Trails System. Still, while the required trail feasibility studies were being conducted during this time, no additional trails were established. Supporters of the System knew it needed to grow but were still trying to figure out how.

In order to enlarge the National Trails System, an important effort was made to coordinate public and agency efforts. The first National Trails Symposium was held June 2-6, 1971, in Washington, D.C. Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton chaired the major plenary sessions. Symposium themes included the status of the 14 feasibility studies ("meaningful progress" reported); status of the two NSTs (coordination, public information, environmental impacts, liability, effects on adjacent land uses, anticipated costs and public use, and land costs and acquisition); and general discussion about national recreation trails which were considered a "primary purpose" of the National Trails System and which appeared to be largely ignored so far.[39]

To rectify this last complaint, a public event associated with the Symposium was held. This event recognized the first 27 NRTs with a ribbon-cutting ceremony along the Fort Circle Hiker/Biker Trail that connects Washington D.C.'s Civil War fort sites.

The challenge of considering historic routes as NSTs surfaced at the 1971 Symposium in a report on the status of NST feasibility studies given by Stuart P. Davey, Chief, Division of Resource Area Studies, BOR. Mr. Davey stated:

> *How to handle preservation of historic routes and have recreational use is a major problem. Historic routes do not necessarily make good recreation trails. ... Today these routes pass through corn fields and villages, and are frequently covered over with reservoirs, railroads or highways since these routes also followed the easiest terrain. The Oregon Trail has many of these problems and is one of the best known routes. Therefore, it will be [the] first of the historic routes to be studied in detail.* [40]

The first National Trails Symposium was such a success that the Openlands Project of Chicago was persuaded to organize another symposium for two years later. Held June 14-17, 1973, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this Symposium included several important highlights:

- A report on the Interagency Trails Task Force's trail criteria.
- A report on the first 39 NRTs recognized to date.
- The increasing interest in an historic trails category (The Symposium announced that the Oregon Trail study, which was then being written, would "be selected as the Pilot Study for the study of other trails" to follow.) [41]
- The concept of "trails as a way of life" in our country's history: as representing hardship and toil, the need to seek new horizons and new opportunities.
- Status of trail user groups and management agency issues: there were overwhelming problems with meeting demands of increased trail use, and an expanding need for trail construction and development.
- Federal budget cuts were anticipated for open space land, trails construction, and maintenance. This would have a negative effect on the BOR's Land and Water Conservation Fund and Housing and Urban Development's Open Space Funding Program.[42]
- An international perspective offered by Chris Hall of the Ramblers' Association of Great Britain who discussed the ancient British system of walking routes and the concerted efforts to preserve them. He also described efforts to develop a British system of national long-distance paths building off the completed national route — the 268-mile Penine Way — that had been first suggested by two American girls in 1935.[43]

The Symposium proved vital to maintaining interagency cooperation and contact. Subsequently, since 1973, National Trails Symposia have been held faithfully every other year in locations across the Nation, including Alaska.[44]

As the decade progressed, the efforts of the Interagency Trails Task Force increased. In 1974, responding to Congressional discussions and actions, it issued draft guidelines and criteria for current trails and those to be added to the National Trails System. This included criteria for the three existing types of trails (NSTs, NRTs, and connecting-side trails) and guidelines and criteria for the potential category of national historic trails. The comments and questions in response to these included the observations that:

- The language of the Act was confusing, stating that it specifically created a "National Trails System," but supported a more generic "national system of trails,"

Secretary of the interior and Secretary of Commerce Rogers C.B. Morton. Photo: U.S. Department of Commerce.

HikaNation participants joined with other hikers on the U.S. Capitol steps in the spring of 1981 and then continued on to Cape Henlopen, Delaware — the hike's final destination. Photo: American Hiking Society.

- National Recreation Trails (NRTs) seemed to be the most important part of the system but received the least amount of attention,
- NSTs and NRTs needed clearer justification — as part of a system of extensive long trails in the country, the question was: were they merited? (Inquiries at this time supported the need for a clearer outline of the significance of these trails that made them notably different from non-federally designated trails), and
- Since portions of historic trails had been obliterated by development, obtaining rights of way to create their existence would be nearly impossible and somewhat meaningless. Discussions covered developing sections of historic trails to commemorate their importance in national history while marking the remaining sections of each route with markers where appropriate.[45]

The Task Force's discussions showed that consistency in terminology and meanings was still an issue and a necessity, that there was still confusion about how to justify the national trails, and that the proposed historic trail category remained a desired but questionable addition.

The BOR struggled to meet its obligations and finally finished and produced by 1979 the 14 feasibility studies requested in the original National Trails System Act. Most of the potential NHTs were assessed — especially early in the process — according to their suitability as hiking trails, modeled on the Appalachian or Pacific Crest NSTs. Therefore, BOR shelved several worthy historic routes by recommending them for no further action.

Action was needed for the routes that were not backcountry hiking trails but still merited trail designation as distinct historic routes. This was a possibility under the growing concept that national historic trails should memorialize significant pieces of American history. During the completion of the first 14 feasibility studies, several additional actions helped shape the support of national historic trails:

- Executive Order 11593, *Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment,* May 13, 1971, in furtherance of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.[46]
- Public Law (P.L.) 94-527 requesting eight additional trail feasibility studies, October 17, 1976, the Bartram, Dominguez-Escalante, Florida, Indian Nations, Nez Perce, Pacific Northwest, Desert, and Daniel Boone Trails.
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), October 21, 1976, the Bureau of Land Management's "organic act" which defined BLM's multiple use land management policy.[47]

Bill Kemsley, Jim Kern and Paul Pritchard (left to right) were key founders of American Hiking Society in 1976 and instrumental in its early development. Photo: Jim Kern and the American Hiking Society.

The birth of the American Hiking Society (AHS) in 1976, the first nationwide trails advocacy organization, highlighted changes occurring from within private trails group that led to further public awareness of and support for a balanced national trails system. [48] Almost a decade after the NTSA became law, this band of hiking activists realized that in order to influence National Trails System matters in Congress, they should be organized on a national scale. Specifically, the founders of AHS sought to promote and protect hiking trail opportunities by working closely with Federal agencies. One of its first highly visible activities was cosponsorship (with the Heritage Conservation Recreation Service — successor to the BOR) in 1981 of HikaNation, a coast-to-coast group hike to promote the benefits of hiking nationwide. This route became the basis in 1990 for laying out the American Discovery Trail. In 1993, AHS and *Backpacker* magazine inaugurated National Trails Day which has continued ever since. In addition, AHS has stayed strongly committed to certain principles of the National Trails System — such as volunteerism

— by placing volunteers in dozens of locales in public lands each year through the program "Volunteer Vacations." AHS has proven to be a steady and helpful advocate for all aspects of the National Trails System.

The National Trails System reached a new peak in development and popularity with the help of AHS and new support at the Federal level. In May of 1977, newly-elected President Jimmy Carter delivered to Congress what became known as his Environment Message, in which he noted that nine years after the passage of the National Trails System Act only two trails — the Appalachian and the Pacific Crest NSTs — had been designated by Congress. He also noted that, in the meantime, other unprotected trails on public lands had become unusable. In an effort to restore and broaden the National Trails System, he promised to submit legislation to Congress to designate three new NSTs: the Continental Divide, the North Country, and the Potomac Heritage Trails. Carter also stated that in the near future he would present legislation establishing a national historic trail category.[49]

Creation of the category of national historic trails (NHTs) by an amendment to the National Trails System Act in 1978 was the result of Presidential action coupled with the tireless work of the individuals associated with trails. In a letter dated October 5, 1977, on behalf of Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus, Interior Under Secretary James Joseph, transmitted draft legislation to Rep. Morris Udall (D-AZ), Chairman of the House Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee, requesting that the Oregon Trail be established as an NHT. The letter outlined the purpose of the NHT designation as well as the rationale of historic trails as a category.

> *These trail routes, although important for their historic aspects, do not fit readily into the scenic trail mold. They are, however, significant routes, which have played major roles in the history of our country. For that reason, and because certain segments of the routes can provide nationally significant interpretive/recreation opportunities and have high potential for enhancing the public's identification with the Nation's heritage, these routes merit Federal recognition.*[50]

A hearing was held on May 1, 1978 by the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, to hear a variety of testimony on the category of historic trails and various bills proposing to establish the Iditarod, Oregon, Lewis & Clark, and Mormon Pioneer NHTs. Bill were introduced by both Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and the committee chairman on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior defining the new category. Some western Senators were nervous about authorizing long linear park-like corridors across their states. Others insisted that the historic trails would mainly consist of marked routes and interpretive facilities (they would not be continuous, emphasizing only the fragmented remnant ruts and traces). Edward B. Garvey, author of two books published in 1971 and 1978 which tell the story of the Appalachian NST and Garvey's 1970 thru-hike,[51] spoke as legislative representative for the new American Hiking Society and urged dismissal of the Forest Service's amendment to discontinue the use of condemnation on the Pacific Crest NST.[52]

Two amendments to the National Trails System Act — both of which profoundly re-shaped the National Trails System — were passed in 1978. Both relied, in part, on hearings dating back to early 1976 when Appalachian Trail supporters criticized the National Park Service for not adequately protecting the "AT."

The first, P. L. 95-248, passed March 21, 1978, authorized $30 million per year for three years to acquire land for the Appalachian NST. It stated Congress' intent that land acquisition for the trail be substantially completed in three years. It also requested that the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture establish advisory councils for both the Appalachian and Pacific Crest NSTs. These councils would serve to help ensure that management of the national trails remained as uniform and publicly responsive as possible. In addition, the law also called for the preparation within two years of a comprehensive plan for the management, acquisition, development and use of the Appalachian NST, the trail that continued to serve as the successful model trail throughout this decade.

President Jimmy Carter at a press conference October 1978. Photo: National Archives, 181823.

The second important law amending the Act in 1978, signed by President Carter on November 10, was a large omnibus bill, P.L. 95-625, called the National Parks and Recreational Land Act of 1978. It established the new category of national historic trails (NHTs) and added five new trails (the first in 10 years) to the National Trails System: the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, Lewis and Clark, Iditarod NHTs, and the Continental Divide NST. Rep. Phillip Burton (D-CA) compiled the bill and guided it to passage.

One important feature of the authorizations for these trails was the significant weakening of the original land acquisition authorities of the Trails Act by prohibiting Federal agencies from spending funds to acquire lands for these new trails outside the exterior boundaries of existing Federal areas. This restrictive language may have been a reaction, in part, to the sweeping land acquisition program authorized for the Appalachian NST earlier that year and the concerns of conservative western senators that eminent domain and resources on that scale might someday target ranch lands in their states. This language restricting acquisition by Federal agencies was applied to several later NSTs and NHTs and has had far-reaching effects in slowing the pace by which these trails have been established on the ground.

These new trails had all been included in the original 14 feasibility studies conducted by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. Table A shows the trails studies conducted by BOR, in the order they were completed, also showing the order in which they were listed in the 1968 Act and indicating which studies finally led to designation and which did not.

This new omnibus bill also requested a feasibility study for the Overmountain Victory Trail, and broadened the requirement for advisory councils (to be established within one year of designation) for all the NSTs and NHTs and the requirement for a comprehensive plan for all the national scenic and historic trails established under the Act.[53]

After the addition of national historic trails to the National Trails System, the direction of the System began to change. Instead of long backcountry hiking trails, the focus became historic trails. In fact, the last NSTs authorized (as of this writing) — the Natchez Trace, Potomac Heritage, and Florida NSTs — were added only a few years later in 1983, and of these, the Natchez Trace and Potomac Heritage NSTs have strong historical and cultural themes.

Table A. National Trails System Feasibility Studies, 1968-1979

(Order in Act) Trail study	Study completed (year)	Follow-up action
(2) Potomac Heritage	1973	Established as an NST in 1983
(13) Mormon Battalion	1974	
(3) Old Cattle Trails of the Southwest	1975	
(6) North Country	1975	Established as an NST in 1980
(7) Kittanning Path	1975	
(10) Long Trail	1975	
(9) Santa Fe	1976	Established as an NHT in 1987
(4) Lewis and Clark	1977	Established as an NHT in 1978
(8) Oregon	1977	Established as an NHT in 1978
(1) Continental Divide	1977	Established as an NST in 1978
(14) El Camino Real (Florida)	1977	
(12) Gold Rush Trails in Alaska	1977	Established as an NHT in 1978
(11) Mormon Pioneer	1978	Established as an NHT in 1978
(5) Natchez Trace	1979	Established as an NST in 1983

Ezra Meeker stands by Chimney Rock in western Nebraska during his first re-enactment trip along the Oregon Trail in 1906. Photo: David Welch.

This path leads to Martins Cove in Wyoming, the site of terrible suffering and death in a snowstorm in October, 1856, along the Mormon Pioneer NHT. Photo: NPS.

Oregon NHT

Hundreds of thousands of emigrants followed this 1,200-mile route in the 1840s and 1850s leaving the United States for the fabled Oregon Territory in search of wealth and fresh opportunities. Families and individuals traveled in covered wagon trains that crossed the Great Plains and snaked through rough mountain terrain. This overland route crossing the Rocky Mountains at South Pass, in what is now western Wyoming, was first explored by fur traders in the early 1800s. In 1836 a missionary party headed by Marcus and Narcissa Whitman proved it could be accomplished by wagon — and the flood of westward expansion began.

The Oregon NHT today stretches over 2,000 miles from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City, Oregon and is administered by the National Park Service in close partnership with the Oregon-California Trails Association.[54] The Oregon Trail was the first historic trail added to the National Trails System — and many of the underlying concepts of this type of trail were developed in this trail's feasibility study.

Mormon Pioneer NHT

The Mormon Pioneer Trail was another one of the first trails to be designated a NHT. Considered one of the most highly organized expeditions in U.S. history, the Mormon migration symbolizes courage and hope. It memorializes the exodus of Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, west to the Great Salt Lake in 1846-7. In the mid 1840s, on the banks of the Mississippi River at Nauvoo, the Mormon Church established its temple and community. However, nearby residents became enraged at the Mormons' presence, and an angry mob murdered leader Joseph Smith. When Brigham Young was elected their new leader and they faced increasing persecution, most of the Mormon population embarked upon a highly organized migration west.[55] Upon reaching their destination — the Great Salt Lake valley — and setting up an independent community, church members traveled east again to guide other converts back to Utah. In the 1970s, when it was announced that the Federal Government would be conducting studies on potential trails, floods of letters were sent to the BOR proposing a Mormon Trail. Congressman Frank Moss from Iowa gave the measure his full support and frequently contacted BOR officials about this matter.[56] Today, the trail is administered by the National Park Service with assistance from the Mormon Trails Association and the Iowa Mormon Trails Association.

Volunteers work at Herman Gulch, Colorado, along the Continental Divide NST during National Trails Day, 2005. Photo: CDTA.

The Corps of Discovery II exhibits, shown here at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia, in the spring of 2003, brought the story of Lewis and Clark's 1803-1806 journey to many communities along the route of their travels. Photo: NPS.

Continental Divide NST

Officially established in 1978, this trail fulfills hikers' dreams of journeying along North America's mountain backbone. Extending from Canada to Mexico, the "CDT" crosses many ecosystems from tundra to desert. It hosts a rich variety of wildlife and preserves hundreds of natural, cultural and historical assets. Considered one of the great long-distance trails in the world, it is the most remote of the NSTs. In the mid 1970s, Baltimore lawyer and Appalachian Trail thru-hiker Jim Wolfe hiked part of this route and became so enamored with it that he published a guidebook and advocated for its authorization as an NST. In 1976, the BOR completed the feasibility study and noted that the scenic quality of the trail was superlative. Today the trail is administered by the USDA Forest Service in partnership with both the Continental Divide Trail Society and the Continental Divide Trail Alliance which catalyze broad public awareness and volunteer enthusiasm for the Trail in the five states it crosses.[57]

Lewis and Clark NHT

In 1964 Congress established the Lewis and Clark Trail Commission to "stimulate Federal, state, and local agencies to identify, mark, and preserve for the public inspiration and enjoyment the route traveled by Lewis and Clark." The Commission's final report recommended establishing a private, nonprofit organization to help carry out the mission. The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation was formed the following year. The Lewis & Clark NHT was established in 1978. Americans have always loved Lewis and Clark, the first European-Americans to explore much of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase. Their journals documenting scientific observation, exploration, commerce, expansion, and conflict have inspired generations of readers. The Trail traces their journey from the western edge of U.S. territory (now Wood River, Illinois) to the Pacific Coast at the mouth of the Columbia River and back, largely afloat on the Missouri and Columbia Rivers.[58] President Jefferson charged them with learning about the Native American nations that they would encounter, plant and animal life along the route, and the nature of the land for future settlement. Today the trail is administered by the National Park Service with the support and assistance of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. The bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition between 2003 and 2006 proved to be the single largest and most publicized event in the entire saga of the National Trails System.

A dogsled musher greets a snow machine driver along the Iditarod NHT in Alaska. Photo: Kevin Keeler/BLM.

Iditarod NHT

It is fitting that Alaska's premier dogsled trail — the Iditarod — was among the first NHTs established by law. Each year, parts of this Alaskan route host the Iditarod Dogsled Race in late winter for 11 days over 1,100 miles. The mushers race their teams across the harsh Alaskan wilderness against time and the elements. In many places, dog sledding still serves as the most effective method of transportation carrying people, goods, and supplies across frozen terrain. Senator Ernest Gruening (D-Alaska) participated in discussions leading to the 1968 Act. He wondered whether or not trails like the Iditarod could be included in this new national system of trails. This trail has deep historic roots, for it is believed that people have been negotiating trails across "The Great Land" for approximately 15,000 years.[59] People first populated Alaska and Northern Canada after traveling from Siberia on the land bridge across the Bering Strait. For centuries, the trail served as a trading route for the native Ingalik and Tanaina Indians. This NHT is administered by the Bureau of Land Management with the help of the Iditarod National Historic Trail Alliance, the trail's nonprofit partner organization. Many trail sections are maintained by dedicated volunteers.[60]

Building the System 1978-1990

I would very much like to see reasonable scenic routes developed, but I favor the development of the historic trails and give them a higher priority than scenic routes.[61]

President Ronald Reagan. Photo: Ronald Reagan Library.

After passage of the 1978 amendments, the National Trails System now contained seven continental-scale national trails. Public Law 95-625 added the category of national historic trails (NHTs), three new national scenic trails (NSTs) totaling almost 8,000 in combined lengths, and the four new NHTs which together totaled over 9,500 miles in designated routes. To meet the requirement for comprehensive management plans for each of these trails, the USDA Forest Service (FS) and National Park Service (NPS) had to assemble teams to carry out these plans — while simultaneously gearing up for a major land acquisition campaign to protect the Appalachian NST.

During this time, agency names and responsibilities began to change. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) had just completed the first 14 studies when it was transformed as an agency into the Heritage, Conservation, and Recreation Service (HCRS) in 1978. The authority to conduct NST and NHT feasibility studies was then transferred to the National Park Service.[62] From 1979 on, the only responsibilities HCRS had for the National Trails System was to chair the Interagency Trails Task Force and handle the designation of National Recreation Trails (NRTs) by the Secretary of the Interior. However, in 1981, after the Reagan administration came into position, the president's newly-appointed Secretary of the Interior James Watt abolished the HCRS as an agency by secretarial order. Its employees and program responsibilities were assigned to the National Park Service, and the Interagency Trails Task Force was disbanded.[63]

Meanwhile, a steady drumbeat of bills during the Reagan administration led to more National Trails System Act (NTSA) amendments. These either called for more trail feasibility studies or the establishment of new trails based on completed studies. Table B shows legislative action on trails between 1980 and 1984.

Table B. Legislative Actions in the 96th and 98th Congresses

Date	Public Law	Trail Action
03/05/1980	96-199	Established the North Country NST
09/08/1980	96-344	Established the Overmountain Victory NHT
10/03/1980	96-370	Established the Ice Age NST (without a feasibility study)
03/28/1983	98-11	Established the Natchez Trace, Florida, and Potomac Heritage NSTs and requested studies for Juan Bautista de Anza, Trail of Tears, Illinois, Jedediah Smith, General Crook, and Beale Wagon Trails (plus other administrative authorities added or clarified)
08/28/1984	98-504	Requested feasibility studies for the California and Pony Express Trails

Of these amendments to the NTSA, the most important was P.L. 98-11, a law discussed in various places throughout this chapter. Prior to its passage, ranking House committee member for hearings on the related House bill, Keith Sebelius (R-KS), made remarks on the House floor that aptly describe the dilemma many trail staffers and supporters still face in trying to fully protect and operate a trail:

In the preceding several years numerous new trails have been and are being added to the trails system. At the same time the same Congress has weakened, and continues to weaken, the working provisions and tools of the trails act to the extent that the true workability of most of the trails system is greatly reduced. In the simplest words, we love to designate trails, while at the same time we seriously curtail their workability on the ground . . .We are indeed deeply in the rut of creating "paper trails" -- good stuff on paper, but fairly worthless on the ground where they really count. [64]

North Country Trail supporters honor former Wisconsin governor and Senator Gaylord Nelson at the Brule River State Forest, Wisconsin, in 2002. Gaylord "Hap" Nelson, Jr., Gaylord Yost, Martin Hanson, and Bob Papp help unveil the new monument. Photo: NPS.

School children from Abingdon, Virginia help launch the 33rd annual re-enactment of the Overmountain Men's March, September 2008. Photo: Overmountain Victory.org

North Country NST

Winding through seven states, the North Country NST presents hikers with myriad natural and cultural treasures. Linking unspoiled scenic landscapes and historic sites this trail wanders across the Great Lakes states from the Adirondacks of New York to the Missouri River in North Dakota. The trail was conceived in the 1960s during the Nationwide Trails Study and was included in the 1966 *Trails for America* report as a proposed National Scenic Trail When completed, it will be the longest continuous scenic trail at over 4,200 miles in length. Administered by the National Park Service, the ongoing task of blazing and maintaining the trail is taken up in large part by the North Country Trail Association and regional affiliates such as the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (New York) and Buckeye Trail Association (Ohio). Its mission is to develop, maintain, preserve and promote the Trail through a national network of volunteers, chapters, partner organizations and government agencies.[66]

Overmountain Victory NHT

Tracing 330 miles of Revolutionary War history, the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail crosses parts of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina. When first established, the Overmountain Victory NHT was not well known — yet its story was key to American history. Noted by Thomas Jefferson as a major turning point of the American Revolution, this trail commemorates the journey of the Overmountain Men, a group of 2,000 backwoods patriots who sought to defeat British loyalists during the Southern Campaign in 1780. That September, men gathered at various points along the route, such as Abingdon, Virginia, and Sycamore Shoals, Tennessee, and rode hundreds of miles in 14 days, finally catching up with the British at Kings Mountain, South Carolina. There they defeated Major Patrick Ferguson and his loyalist followers, killing or capturing every one. This skirmish helped turn the tide against the British during the Revolutionary War.[67] The Trail was established during its bicentennial year in 1980. Today, the trail is administered by the National Park Service with the help of many partners, including the Overmountain Victory Trail Association.[68]

These volunteers place rock edging along the Ice Age NST in Wisconsin. Photo: NPS.

Children ride bikes opposite Washington, D.C., along the Mount Vernon Trail, a component of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. Photo: NPS.

Ice Age NST

The Ice Age NST leads visitors and hikers through a set of glacial landscapes — moraines, eskers, kettle holes, kames, and outwash plains. Administered by the National Park Service in a "triad" relationship with the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources it will eventually wind over 1,000 miles across Wisconsin, witness to the farthest southern extent of Wisconsin continental glaciation 10,000 years ago. Trail segments offer many charming opportunities for walking and snowshoeing — both day trips and longer hikes. The trail touches many towns along the way, each offering local character to this trail that seeks to highlight and conserve Wisconsin's glacial heritage.[69] The Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation offers nonprofit support and volunteers while the State of Wisconsin leads efforts to acquire and protect lands needed for establishing the remainder of the trail.

Potomac Heritage NST

The Potomac Heritage NST, snakes through five physiographic provinces among the lush and historic landscapes of Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Pennsylvania. The trail proposed originally by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965 and documented in concept as far back as *Trails for America* in 1966, was finally established by law in 1983.[70] Today, the Trail is a developing network of locally-managed trails, including the 184.5-mile towpath of the Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park, the Mount Vernon Trail and other trails in northern Virginia, the Alexandria Heritage Trail in Alexandria, Virginia, and the Great Allegheny Passage connecting Cumberland, Maryland, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.[71] This trail network traces places and events at the heart of the Nation's evolution. Bridging two major watersheds, Trail segments guide users through a rich combination of natural areas, historic sites, and vibrant cities and towns.

This 90-acre complex of eight burial mounds was built from about 1,800 to 2,000 years ago. Pharr Mounds, Mississippi is one of six mound groups along the Natchez Trace Parkway. Photo: NPS.

On a hike sponsored by the Florida Trail Association, kids explore the Big Cypress National Preserve in southern Florida. Photo: Florida Trail Association.

Natchez Trace NST

This trail, although called an NST, evokes deep history. In addition to navigating beautiful landscapes, the Natchez Trace reveals many haunting layers from pre-historic times to the present. Initially the footpaths of the Choctaw and Cherokee Indians, this chain of trails was used by Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto, frontier European farmers, and even Meriwether Lewis, traveling from New Orleans to Washington, D.C.. In 1809, Lewis died — either from foul play or suicide — at Grinders Stand along the Trace. Connecting Natchez, on the Mississippi River, to Nashville, on the Cumberland River, about half of the remnant Trace lies within the boundaries of the Natchez Trace Parkway.[72] Along the path, visitors will find Indian burial mounds, a restored Chickasaw village, Civil War battlefields, and the remains of U.S. Army posts. Of the 694 miles of original Trace, 65 miles in four discontinuous segments are now open to the public for recreation and retracement. The Trail is administered and managed by the National Park Service.

Florida NST

The Florida NST pays homage to the unique and varied subtropical beauty of Florida. This 1,400-mile trail now follows backcountry alignments across the Florida Panhandle from Gulf Islands National Seashore down the length of the peninsula to Big Cypress National Preserve.[73] The concept of this trail was developed by Jim Kern, Miami real estate entrepreneur, after a sojourn to the Appalachian Trail in the early 1960s. Wanting to create a long-distance trail in his home state, he founded the Florida Trail Association. In 1966, volunteer members of the newly minted organization began blazing the Florida Trail. Today, the Florida Trail Association works vigorously in close partnership with the USDA Forest Service in Florida to maintain and connect this trail with other trails throughout Florida.

With the establishment of the Florida NST, the House Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee developed a compromise known as the "willing-seller" clause that opened the door to Federal acquisition outside the boundaries of existing Federal areas when conducted "with the consent of the owner." Previously, the tendency begun in 1978 to limit Federal use of eminent domain and even prohibit Federal agencies from spending funds to acquire lands for trails had generally continued through the Potomac Heritage Trail authorization. The new language, embedded in each trail's establishment bill, has been used for most trails established since 1983.

The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors was established by President Reagan after his re-election in 1984. Created by Executive Order 12503, the charter of this commission focused on a review and update of outdoor recreation opportunities in the United States. Building on the findings and trends of the 1962 ORRRC Report, the new Commission's 1987 report, entitled *Americans Outdoors,* recommended:

- A nationwide system of greenways within easy access of all Americans, and
- A challenge that decisions made between then and the year 2000 would "determine the fate of America's remaining land and water resources."[74]

However, after 1985, a number of additional NTSA amendments resulted in the designation of trails from the earlier feasibility studies. Table C shows the trails designated and studies requested by law between 1986 and 1990.

These NTSA amendments remained centered around national historic trails, confirming that the System had certainly shifted focus away from national scenic trails.

Table C. Legislative Actions in the 99th, 100th, and 101st Congresses

Date	Public Law	Trail Action
10/06/1986	99-445	Established Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) NHT
05/06/1987	100-35	Established Santa Fe NHT
12/11/1987	100-187	Requested study for DeSoto Trail
12/16/1987	100-192	Established Trail of Tears NHT
12/28/1988	100-559	Requested study for Coronado Trail
07/03/1990	101-321	Requested study for the Selma to Montgomery civil rights march route
08/15/1990	101-365	Established the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT

Young Nez Perce Appaloosa Horse Club riders pose at a Nee-Me-Poo Trail sign at Deep Saddle on the Clearwater National Forest. Photo: USDA National Forest.

Nez Perce NHT

This trail memorializes the 1877 journey of the Nez Perce people when they fled their homeland to escape the United States Army.[75] Tensions over land rights between the white settlers and the Nez Perce Nation were growing in the 1870s. When violence erupted, the Nez Perce attempted to flee to Canada in hopes of living in peace again. Their circuitous journey from Oregon through Idaho and Montana — during which they fought and outwitted the U.S. forces — ended at the Bear Paw Mountains in Montana, where cold and decimated, they were forced to surrender. Today, visitors to the Nez Perce NHT can reflect on this tragedy that befell the Native people while taking in a variety of impressive landscapes. The trail connects 38 sites managed as the Nez Perce National Historical Park by the National Park Service. The Trail, however, is administered by the USDA Forest Service in partnership with the Nez Perce Trail Foundation.[76]

A limestone trail marker erected by the Boy Scouts and a covered wagon on the Santa Fe Trail, Kansas. Photo: NPS.

Santa Fe NHT

Representing the blending of cultures and communities, the Santa Fe Trail holds a mythic place in American collective memory. This route has long been a trail of popular interest and folklore. Initially opened as a trade route in 1821 between the United States and newly independent Mexico, the Trail served as an international commercial highway and military road for decades, mixing cultures: Spanish, *mestizo,* Anglo, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche, Osage, Kansas, Ute, and Jicarilla Apache. At the conclusion of the Mexican American War in 1848, the trail connected the United States with its newly acquired Southwest Territories. Throughout its history, the Trail carried freight wagons, stage coaches, emigrants, traders, and fur traders.[77] The National Park Service, as trail administrator, and the Santa Fe Trail Association work together to maintain the Trail, promoting and preserving its physical landscape and historical legacy.[79]

This historic road — now merely a trace through Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas — witnessed the passage of the Cherokee People along the Trail of Tears in 1837-8. Photo: NPS.

Interpretive Specialist David Smith, dressed as Anza, leads a group a school children along the Juan Bautista de Anza NHT. Photo: NPS.

Trail of Tears NHT

Like the Nez Perce NHT, this trail also commemorates Indian removal. It was designated in 1987 at the 150th anniversary of the Cherokee Removal and retraces the routes used by the U.S. Army to forcibly move the Cherokee people from their native homelands in Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia and Alabama to Indian Territory in present day Oklahoma. Nearly one-fifth of the Cherokee Nation died in the holding forts and during the journey. [80] Today the Trail consists of two routes — one on land and one on rivers — representing several paths taken by different segments of the Cherokee. Two more overland routes plus various catchment routes may be added to the Trail. The major nonprofit trail partner, the Trail of Tears Association, is devoted to the protection, preservation, development and interpretation of the Trail. The Trail is administered by the National Park Service. At many sites visitors learn of the effects of the U. S. Government's Indian Removal Policy on the native peoples, including the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee Creek and Seminole tribes.[81]

Juan Bautista de Anza NHT

This trail follows the 1775-6 journey of a frontier governor of New Spain who guided a military guard, several church fathers, and 200 settlers and their stock from Sonora, Mexico, to colonize the Golden Gate for Spain. Throughout the journey, the expedition suffered rough weather, lack of water, and even an earthquake. Remarkably, only one person perished. This expedition settled the Presidio of what is today's San Francisco, California, along with the missions at San Francisco de Asís (Mission Dolores) and Santa Clara de Asís.[83] The Trail was strongly promoted by George Cardinet, a long-time equestrian trail enthusiast in California. He founded the nonprofit group, Amigos de Anza, which is dedicated to the preservation and protection of the Trail. Twice, in 1976 and 1996, riders reenacted the journey from Mexico to California, riding on horseback and wearing period dress.[84] The trail was established in 1990 and is administered by the National Park Service.

Important administrative authorities were part of The National Trails System Act Amendments of 1983 (P. L. 98-11) which also requested six more studies and established three trails. Several of these administrative authorities were crafted by Appalachian Trail activists, but worded so that they would apply anywhere in the National Trails System. One new section of the Act (Sec. 11) listed the full range of activities that volunteers could carry out for these trails: planning, development, maintenance, and management. Coupled with this was an amendment to section 7(h) that extended the Volunteers in the Park and Volunteers in the Forests programs to volunteers working on national trails. Language in the committee report on the bill also clarified that this status could even be conferred on private landowners hosting national trails on their lands to help reduce their personal liability when engaged in trail activities.

The 1983 amendments also requested that a National Trails Plan be submitted to Congress every other year. These were never conducted, however, and this requirement was later removed from the NTSA in 2000.

These amendments also clarified land protection authorities and management transfers that would be useful to the Appalachian NST and added a section of definitions (NTSA Sec. 12). The new law included a requirement that any NRT nomination for a trail crossing private lands had to include written permission from affected private landowners. Similarly, it refined the process for nominating connecting and side trails, allowed for regulations pertaining to National Forests and National Parks to be applied to the trails, and defined acceptable trail uses. The law had an additional stipulation that any land interest donated for these trails would qualify for conservation tax credits under Internal Revenue Service code.

One additional provision in Public Law 98-11 would revolutionize trail making across America: the recycling of abandoned railroads for recreation trail use. In a single paragraph (NTSA Sec. 8(d)), the Act authorized the Interstate Commerce Commission to preserve abandoned railroad rights-of-way for use as recreation trails on an interim basis. This amendment gave birth to the "rail-to-trails" movement, launched first in the United States, and now found worldwide. A few years later in 1986, this innovative form of re-cycling resulted in the founding of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), a nonprofit organization intended to foster the conversion of abandoned railway lines into public trails.

From its beginning, RTC worked with communities to preserve unused rail corridors by transforming them into recreation trails for health, economic benefits, and increased quality of life. RTC helped pass P.L. 100-470 (October 4, 1988), providing for Federal retention of interest in abandoned railroad rights-of-way on Federal Lands for use as trails in national conservation areas or national forests. The new law also expanded secretarial control of rights-of-ways, especially abandoned railroads, and reverted Federal rights-of-way back to the Federal Government unless used for highways. RTC was instrumental in building Congressional support for funding National Park Service trail programs.[85] Today, RTC is the Nation's largest national trails membership organization (over 110,000 members) and aspires to create a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines to promote health and an improved quality of life.

In 1988, cyclists peer into a tunnel along the Elroy Sparta Bike Trail, an NRT nominated in 1971. Photo: Wisconsin DNR.

As the 1980s drew to a close, several additional developments occurred that further shaped the National Trails System. In 1988, the National Trails Council, organizer of biennial National Trails Symposia, merged with the American Trails Network, a recently developed group that aspired to connect all of the state capitals via a network of trails.[87] Together, these two groups formed "American Trails," a nonprofit organization intended to enhance and protect all types of trails in the U.S. — both motorized and non-motorized — by promoting cooperation and encouraging resolution of common trail issues. American Trail coordinates the biennial National Trails Symposia and promotes trail cooperation through its magazine of the same name, *American Trails* — a quarterly which continues to improve in coverage and relevance to all trail managers.

When first organized, American Trails sponsored *Trails for All Americans: the National Trails Agenda Project*, a trails task force begun in 1988, endorsed by the National Park Service and chaired by ATC Executive Director, David

Rail-trails

A hundred years ago, railroads sliced through America's countrysides and along its coastlines and riverbanks. When local rail lines no longer proved economical, thousands of miles of railroad track were abandoned. These tracks snake across the country connecting villages and towns. By protecting them intact for possible future transportation uses — a process called "railbanking"— the National Trails System Act encourages them to be used as recreational trails in the interim. Such rail-trails often connect a series of towns and cities, making public access to them easy. One excellent example is the Air Line Rail Trail in eastern Connecticut. This 50-mile trail connects many towns from East Hampton to Thompson. The Air Line Railroad was conceived in the mid 1800's to connect New York City to Boston, and after great political wrangling, the railroad was eventually built. In operation until the 1960s, the line was abandoned due to disrepair and improved transportation technology. In the mid 1980s, planning for a recreation greenway began in eastern Connecticut, and this trail was designated an NRT in 2002. Today, the trail enables people to escape from their busy lives for a while and get re-acquainted with nature. It welcomes outdoor enthusiasts of all stripes, including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.[86]

The first NST-NHT Conference at Camp Whitcomb, near Hartland, Wisconsin. Photo: NPS.

Startzell. It articulated current trail issues and made recommendations to address America's current and future need for trails, reaffirming the importance of reliable, efficient, and inexpensive trail recreation. The 1990 report of the *Trails for All Americans* Task Force suggested that trails, like highways, be viewed as part of America's infrastructure and re-emphasized the goal that all Americans be able to reach a trail within 15 minutes of home.[88]

Another important milestone occurred in 1988. The NPS administration of the Ice Age and North Country NSTs and the Lewis & Clark NHT was a one-man operation in the Midwest regional office in Omaha, Nebraska. That sole staffer, Tom Gilbert, along with Gary Werner, an employee of the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation, organized and arranged the first-ever conference on NSTs and NHTs at Camp Whitcomb near Hartland, Wisconsin. They invited representatives of each of the NSTs and NHTs to come discuss the status of the trails, along with common problems and challenges, and to share successes and solutions. The conference was the first meeting of NST and NHT leadership ever held outside the context of a National Trails Symposium. At the meeting, commonalities were found, and the representatives pledged to meet again when possible. Leo Rasmussen, an Iditarod NHT enthusiast and Mayor of Nome, Alaska, also challenged the group to organize a nonprofit coalition — a challenge that would become reality in the next decade.

A year later in 1989, the National Park Service established a National Trails System staff position in its Washington, D.C., headquarters. Steven Elkinton was hired and has held this position ever since. As National Trails System program leader, Elkinton has updated the *National Trails System Map and Guide* through several editions, monitored legislation and budgets, crafted policy and strategic goals for national trails, funded special projects benefiting the entire System, and facilitated national trails conferences and staff meetings. He has also used his position to encourage annual national staff meetings and training sessions, and most recently conducted in-depth surveys of all feasibility studies and comprehensive management plans developed through 2004. Importantly, he helped reactivate the Interagency Trails Task Force to form the Federal Interagency Council on Trails in 1990, and with the addition of another staff member — Helen Scully in 2000 — the capacity of the NPS national office has increased to stay abreast of this growing system.

In 1990, the USDA Forest Service added National Trails System oversight to its national office in the Dispersed Recreation Program. Guided in part by the long-standing NPS/FS staff collaboration on the Appalachian NST, this position has evolved and matured over the years.

Maturation of the System 1990-2008

Our long and continuing successful experience in cooperative work with the Park Service, with other Federal agencies, and with State and private organizations and individuals all over the Nation prove that a working team of Federal, State, and private groups can make an effective partnership. [89]

The most significant development in the 1990s affecting the National Trails System was the formation of the "Committee of 17". This nationwide coalition of partners, building on the vision of the 1988 Hartland conference, was formed specifically to enhance the base budgets of each trail to at least $250,000 on average and have the Federal administering agency for each trail assign at least one full-time staff member to each trail. This new committee was formed by participants at the 2nd Conference on Scenic and Historic Trails, held on the edge of the picturesque Columbia River Gorge at Corbett, Oregon, in November, 1991.

The Committee of 17 played an increasing role in a sequence of biennial conferences that followed. Its early leadership came to rest on Gary Werner, one of the 1988 conference organizers. To build long-term relationships with Congressional members and staff — as well as with administration leaders — Werner began a series of visits to Capitol Hill in 1992, bringing various trail partners with him. Though he returned to the Committee empty-handed the first year, long-time California trails advocate George H. Cardinet bellowed: "We will just keep going back and going back until we get what we need!" His charge not only reflected his own determination but also the creative persistence that distinguished the Committee of 17. In 1995, in partnership with the American Hiking Society, Cardinet orchestrated what became the annual midwinter "Hike the Hill" Trails Advocacy Week.

At the 1995 Scenic and Historic Trails Conference in Chevy Chase, Maryland, this coalition formally changed its name to the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS), and in 1997 it formalized a Leadership Council and Executive Committee structure, obtaining 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in 2001. The Partnership's primary goal remains achieving better funding for the NSTs and NHTs. However, its scope and structure have also gradually expanded following a strategic plan developed during the years 2004-2007.

Joyce Badgely Smith, as "Fanny," closed the Menucha conference in 1991 with a dramatic monologue based on her own great-grandmother's Oregon Trail journals. Photo: NPS.

The first three issues of *Pathways Across America*. Photo: NPS.

Public awareness of the National Trails System slowly increased. The launching in 1988 of *Pathways Across America* -- the only periodical devoted exclusively to NSTs and NHTs — was one major tool that assisted national trails promotion. For many years, *Pathways Across America* was produced, printed, and distributed through a cooperative agreement between NPS and the American Hiking Society. When Gary Werner took over as editor around 1998, the publication slowly shifted into a major communications tool of the Partnership for the National Trails System. In 2003, editing and production formally passed from AHS to PNTS, with funding provided by a growing circle of Federal agencies. This publication remains in circulation as a quarterly and can boast a readership that has expanded from 1,200 to more than 2,000 over the years.

As public awareness increased, so did organization of partner groups dedicated to the success of the National Trails System. Building on the successful networking that occurred at the 1988 and 1991 trails conferences, NPS, Forest Service, and BLM provided financial assistance and organizational help for a new set of biennial conferences in the period approaching the new millennium. NPS first organized these conferences in partnership with one or more nonprofit host groups, such as the Oregon-California Trails Association. Conference planning fully passed to the Partnership for the National Trails System in 1999. The location of each conference featured field trips to nearby NSTs and NHTs. These conferences are listed in Table D, below.

Table D. Sequence of National Scenic and Historic Trail Conferences, 1988-2007

Year	Location	Featured Trail(s)
1988	Camp Whitcomb, Hartland, Wisconsin	Ice Age NST
1991	"Menucha," Corbett, Oregon	Oregon and Lewis and Clark NHTs, and Pacific Crest NST
1993	"Mo-Kan," Kansas City, Missouri	Oregon, California, Lewis and Clark NHTs
1995	National 4-H Center, Chevy Chase, Maryland	Potomac Heritage and Appalachian NSTs
1997	Oviedo, Florida	Florida NST
1999	Zephyr Point, Lake Tahoe, Nevada	California and Pony Express NHTs, and Pacific Crest NST
2001	Casper, Wyoming	Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Mormon NHTs
2002	Fort Smith, Arkansas	Trail of Tears NHT
2003	Skagit Valley Resort, Bow, Washington	Pacific Northwest Trail [90]
2005	Las Vegas, Nevada	Old Spanish NHT
2007	Duluth, Minnesota	North Country NST
2009	Missoula, Montana	Continental Divide NST, Lewis and Clark, and Nez Perce NHTs

Significant trail anniversaries also helped foster awareness of the National Trails System. In the years leading up to the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) in 1993, many new trail partners became involved in that trail. The wagon trains, re-enactments, improved visitor sites, and new state programs designed to enhance the historic trail legacy inspired the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to become fully engaged in NSTs and NHTs. Building on this momentum, the BLM followed the example of the National Park Service and Forest Service in 1996 by establishing a full-time National Trails System position, first stationed in Washington, D.C., then later in Riverside, California, and Whitefish, Montana. Deb Salt has held this National Trails coordinator position from its establishment, which now falls under BLM's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). Of the three agencies primarily involved with the National Trails, BLM was the first to issue a formal work plan: the *National Scenic and Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan* (2006).[91]

On many fronts, the 1990s seemed a period of re-tooling and building capacity. One aspect of the trails that had been neglected was a set of standardized trail marker logos as authorized in Section 7 of the NTSA and graphically established by the Interagency Trails Task Force in the early 1970s. Since the disbanding of the Task Force, each trail office had gone off in its own direction. All used the rounded triangle form, but while some had wide borders, others had none. Font types also differed. There were also no standard rules for their placement, use, or protection on the trails.

A standard logo would ensure that national trails were easily recognizable and protected, and that system graphics harmonized. NPS then hired graphic designer Paul Singer, noted for Audubon Guide logos, to examine the entire set of National Trails System logos and make recommendations for ways they could be revised to hold together graphically as a systematic set. By now there were places — especially along the Platte River valley in Nebraska and Wyoming — where up to four NHTs overlapped. Paul Singer and Associates adjusted most of the trail marker logos and developed new ones for the Ice Age NST and the newly created California and Pony Express NHTs. Soon after, NPS published all of the logos for NPS-administered NSTs and NHTs in the *Federal Register,* putting the public on notice that these were protected against unauthorized uses as official Federal insignia.[92]

As the agencies and nonprofit groups involved in the National Trails System in this period became better organized and increased their building capacity, a steady stream of amendments to the National Trails System Act requested both additional studies and the establishment of new trails. Table E provides a list of these amendments.

This simple list by no means reflects the complex and often hidden politicking associated with the bills that led to these pieces of passed legislation. Although the nonprofit PNTS and AHS were working hard in these years to alter some of the administrative authorities of the National Trails Act (such as the need for willing land seller acquisition authority for trails with restrictions for Federal land acquisition funding), this period is remarkable because despite complex issues and varying political agendas — only bills about new trails and new studies succeeded in getting passed.

Table E. Legislative Actions of the 102nd through the 109th Congresses

Date	Public Law	Trail Action
08/03/1992	102-328	Established the California and Pony Express NHTs
10/23/1992	102-461	Requested studies for Ala Kahakai and American Discovery Trails
11/17/1993	103-144/5	Requested studies for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and El Camino Real para los Tejas
11/12/1996	104-333	Established the Selma to Montgomery NHT and requested studies for the Old Spanish and Great Western Trails
12/07/1999	106-135	Requested study for the Star-Spangled Banner Trail
10/13/2000	106-307	Established El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT
11/13/2000	106-509	Established the Ala Kahakai NHT
08/21/2002	107-214	Requested study for the Long Walk Trail
12/04/2002	107-325	Established the Old Spanish NHT
12/16/2002	107-338	Requested study for the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail
10/18/2004	108-342	Established El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT
08/02/2005	109-54	Requested study of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Historic Water Trail
12/01/2006	109-378	Requested study of two additional major routes plus collection routes associated with the Trail of Tears NHT
12/19/2006	109-418	Established the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT
5/8/2008	110-229	Established the Star-Spangled Banner NHT

Typical concrete trail marker along the California NHT. Photo: NPS.

Pony Express re-enactors swearing in before their re-ride. Photo: Pat Hearty/ National Pony Express Association.

California NHT

The California Trail traces the many routes that gold seeking "49ers" followed to California between 1849 and 1852. After the discovery of gold in late 1848 at Sutter's Mill in California, a flood of 250,000 novice gold seekers and settlers headed to California from various points east. The Trail starts in a variety of places along the western shore of the Missouri River and merges into the earlier Oregon and Mormon Pioneer routes in Nebraska's Platte River valley. On the far side of the Continental Divide at South Pass, the Trails split as the 49ers raced west on the best routes they could find. There are over a dozen ending points in the California goldfields. The routes total over 5,600 miles in combined length. The trail is administered by the National Park Service, and much hard work is carried out by volunteers to maintain, map and mark the historic and auto tour routes and to certify historic segments.[93] The Oregon-California Trails Association is integral to the California Trail's survival.

Pony Express NHT

The Pony Express NHT follows the route ridden by young men on horseback who delivered the Nation's mail. A legendary aspect of the Old West, the Pony Express mail delivery service linked St. Joseph, Missouri to San Francisco. It operated only 19 months from April, 1860, to November, 1861. Yet, despite its short life, the Pony Express delivered 34,000 pieces of mail. Messages that once took six weeks to reach their destination could be delivered in ten days via these tenacious riders. The outbreak of the Civil War ended the U.S. mail contract and a string of telegraph wires soon rendered the Pony Express obsolete by cutting transcontinental delivery time to an instant.[94] In present times, the National Pony Express Association keeps the memory and mystique of the storied riders alive by protecting and preserving the trail using markers and education events. One such event is an annual re-ride between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California — eastbound one year, westbound the next. The 24-hour-a-day, non-stop ride lasts for ten days.[95] The trail is administered by the National Park Service.

Trail Superintendent Catherine Light guides marchers in Montgomery, Alabama, during the 40th anniversary re-enactment of the Voting Rights March from Selma to Montgomery, March 2005. Photo: NPS.

Visitors explore a section of La Jornada del Muerto, "the Journey of Death", along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, near Soccorro, New Mexico. Photo: NPS.

Selma to Montgomery NHT
This Trail commemorates the voting rights struggle in central Alabama in the mid 1960s and the stirring march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in the spring of 1965 that galvanized the Nation. On the afternoon of March 7, the marchers, trained in nonviolence and wishing to carry the coffin of a recently slain riot victim to the State Capitol in Montgomery, started out from the Brown Memorial AME Chapel in Selma and walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. On the far side of the bridge, they were attacked by Alabama State troopers wielding tear gas and clubs. The procession turned back, bloodied but not defeated. Eyewitness TV news of the attack captured the attention of audiences world-wide. Outraged at the severe violence used against peaceful protestors, thousands came to join the cause. Strengthened in numbers, a subsequent march began on March 21, this time under the protection of State and Federal law enforcement. The five-day march along 54 miles of highway ended at the State Capitol in Montgomery where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., movingly addressed the huge crowd. Two months later, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed, lifting discriminatory literacy tests and other measures that prevented minorities from being allowed to vote.[96] The route has also been designated a National Scenic Byway/All American Road by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. The trail is administered by the National Park Service in close cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation.[97]

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT
Legendary and culturally diverse, this route is one of North America's oldest and longest colonial "roads." It served as the route of settlers, priests, and traders coming north from Mexico City to the edges of Spanish influence hard against the Rocky Mountains. Over time it became a blending of Native American, Colonial Mexican, and American cultures. Trade and travel that took place on this Trail shaped America's Southwest encouraging economic stability and permeating cultural barriers.[98] This route began as a chain of Native American trails that was linked by the Spanish and penetrated into what is now the United States about 1598, connecting the lands of northern Mexico to Mexico City. After Mexican independence in 1821, it became an extension south for traders on the Santa Fe Trail. In the 1840s, American troops followed it to invade Mexico in the Mexican-American War. Administered jointly by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management, the Trail is supported by El Camino Real Trail Association (CARTA) which works closely with El Camino Real International Heritage Center near Socorro, NM.[99]

Hikers explore the Ala Kahakai Trail on National Trails Day, 2004, at the black sand beach of Luahinewai. Photo: E Mau Na Ala Hele.

Ala Kahakai NHT

Featuring some of the oldest cultural remains anywhere in the United States, this 175-mile trail links numerous communities with ancient and historic sites around the shoreline of the big island of Hawai'i. These cultural highlights include royal centers, *heiau* (temples), *loko 'ia* (fishponds), *ko'a* (fishing shrines), and *wahi pana* (sacred places). The death of British Captain James Cook and the rise of Hawai'ian king Kamehameha I took place along this trail. Its natural resources include coastal vegetation, tropical ecosystems, migratory birds, and several threatened and endangered endemic species of plants and animals.[100] The trail's establishment was championed by Hawaii Senators Daniel Akaka and Daniel Inouye.[101] This trail is administered by the National Park Service. The nonprofit group E Mau Na Ala Hele ("to perpetuate the trails") was instrumental in getting the trail established and looks forward to helping NPS carry out the Trail's comprehensive management plan. The newly established Ala Kahakai Trail Association will also work to make the Trail a cherished route of Hawaiian heritage.

Old Spanish NHT

Some of the most remote and barren landscapes of North America are crossed by the Old Spanish NHT. This route followed a succession of Native American footpaths to form several mule train trading paths between Santa Fe and Los Angeles in the period between Mexican Independence and the Mexican-American War (1821-1848). Slowly moving mule train caravans carried wool and woolen goods west in trade for horses. It was not a settlers' route and was too rough for wagon trains — yet it enhanced trade across the country. In addition, parts of the Trail saw Indian slave trade, fueled by raids that took place in the trail's hinterlands. The aftermath of this slave trade was felt in Native communities for many years after the trail fell into disuse. American explorers, such as John C. Fremont, used parts of it. The National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management share administrative responsibilities and work cooperatively with the Old Spanish Trail Association to protect and interpret the Trail.[102]

El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT

Measuring more than 2,500 miles in Texas and Louisiana, this braided trail carried settlers, missionaries, and soldiers who established settlements, missions and presidios throughout Texas right up to the edge of French influence in the early 18th Century. This network of routes commemorates the Spanish Royal Road that tied Mexico City to the northeast edge of the Spanish frontier in present day Louisiana. The road impacted peoples and cultures and served as an agent for cultural diffusion, biological exchange, and communication. According to the National Park Service, "use of El Camino Real de los Tejas fostered the mix of Spanish and Mexican traditions, laws and cultures with those of America, resulting in a rich legacy reflected in the people, natural and built landscapes, place names, languages, music and arts of Texas and Louisiana today." The trail is administered by NPS and is supported by El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association.[103]

Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT
First explored in 1608 by Jamestown settler John Smith, this all-water route winds around the edges of the Chesapeake Bay and up many of its tributaries to the first rapids. It is a circuitous route that combines several of his expeditions in a 28-foot shallop (a type of sail-rigged longboat). Captain John Smith was a controversial leader in helping establish the first successful British settlement on American soil, Jamestown, in 1607. Today, over 60 government and private agencies are responsible for making this trail a reality. It provides an opportunity for strong conservation and environmental action since its founding organizers are associated with The Conservation Fund, the National Geographic Society, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Visitors in sailboats, motorboats, and kayaks can retrace the 1608 expeditions. Recently installed interpretative buoys can be called by cell phone for weather, water quality, and historical information. Developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, these buoys are interactive and accessible worldwide.[104] The trail is administered by the National Park Service with support by the Friends of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Trail.

Fort McHenry. Photo: GREATgraphics!

Star-Spangled Banner NHT
This Trail consists largely of water trail routes in the Potomac, Patuxent, and Patapsco Rivers and features the site near Baltimore, Maryland, where the national anthem was written. In the War of 1812, during the summer of 1814, British forces invaded the United States after a long series of provocations and trade disputes. British forces in the Chesapeake Bay overwhelmed the small American navy and marched into Washington D.C., where most of the public buildings were burned. President and Mrs. Madison barely escaped to Virginia, with the important papers of government. The British retreated to their ships and sailed north to lay siege to Baltimore, famous for its anti-British privateers. After being rebuffed at the Battle of North Point, the British started a 25-hour bombardment of Ft. McHenry, the fortified gateway to the city. The fort held and its survival was symbolized by a huge American flag flown at dawn. American lawyer Francis Scott Key, on board a British truce ship negotiating freedom for a client, saw the flag from afar and was inspired to write the poem "The Defense of Ft. McHenry." Set to music it became the national anthem in 1931. The Trail is administered by the National Park Service in close coordination with the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network.

A broad coalition of new transportation partners helped change funding for trails during this period. Supported by such groups as AHS, RTC, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Scenic America, the "Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991" (ISTEA) was passed. This law provided for the first time a variety of Federal funding opportunities for trail projects.

The transportation partners continued with their support on other fronts as well. The Recreational Trails Program (first called the "Symms Fund" in honor of Idaho Senator Steve Symms) required intermodal trails advisory committees to be organized in participating states. In a few years, such committees were organized in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each committee advised the designated State official on recommendations for projects to receive funding.

Other programs — such as Transportation Enhancements (TE) — provided millions of dollars for trails and trail-related facilities of all kinds. TE projects were a set-aside of 10% of every Federal highway project for qualifying non-pavement transportation-related projects. With ISTEA, the Federal Highway Administration became a major player in trails nationwide and the National Trails System specifically. Christopher Douwes, the Recreation Trails Program coordinator, quickly became an essential member of the Federal Interagency Council on Trails.

ISTEA programs pertinent to trails, were retained, strengthened and expanded in 1998 by the next funding law to succeed ISTEA, the "Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century" (or TEA-21). Federal surface transportation funding has historically been authorized in six to seven year cycles. Advancements in computer technology during the 1990s helped groups such as RTC maintain databases to track the projects that these new funds made possible. By the end of the TEA-21 era, Transportation Enhancements funding had become the largest investment in trail projects made by any nation in the world (estimated at $2.5 billion). The NSTs and NHTs tapped a small fraction of these funds, mostly for facilities such as visitor centers, bridges, and sign systems.

An indicator that programs supporting trails were becoming stronger, and not weaker, was reflected in the passage of SAFETEA-LU. In 2005, following TEA-21, the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act — A Legacy for Users" (SAFETEA-LU) was passed, providing surface transportation funding up through 2009. Its authorization of $244.1 billion is still the largest surface transportation investment to date in U.S. history. Within this hundreds of millions of dollars became available through RTP and TE for trail projects associated with the National Trails System.

The Federal Interagency Council on Trails meets at the BLM offices in Washington, D.C., February, 2001. Photo: NPS.

The Pochuck Bridge along the Appalachian NST in northern New Jersey was built by volunteers in several phases funded, in part, by NPS Challenge Cost-Share funds. Photo: NPS.

Other sources of funds available for trails also appeared. For example, Congress authorized the Forest Service to leverage appropriated funds through challenge cost-share matching by which government funds are matched at least one-to-one by partners. BLM authorized similar funding in 1985, becoming a subactivity in 2003. NPS received such authority in 1993. For NSTs and NHTs the availability of challenge cost-share funds to build partnerships has been invaluable ever since. Hundreds of projects have been conceived and carried out through cost-sharing.

Thousands of acres of land have been permanently protected for the Ice Age NST as a result of one such partnership. Beginning in Federal fiscal year 2000 and continuing to the present, supporters of the Ice Age NST have capitalized on the fact that the limitation on Federal land acquisition for the trail prohibits Federal agencies from spending funds for this purpose but does not prohibit the spending of Federal funds by other partners. They have succeeded in getting a series of Federal appropriations varying from $1-3 million annually along with authority to grant the funds to partners. As a willing and active partner, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has received most of the funding and matches it with state dollars.

The Interagency Trails Task Force was revived as the Federal Interagency Council on Trails and has met on a monthly or bimonthly basis ever since. Attendance grew as agencies committed specific staff to National Trails System issues. The meetings of the Federal Interagency Council on Trails function largely as an information exchange, but have also stimulated a variety of initiatives which either directly or indirectly enhance the National Trails System.

Since 1996, agencies participating in the Council have signed a series of non-financial agreements called memoranda of understanding, or MOUs. These memoranda formalize National Trails System agency collaboration, for trails or trails-supporting projects. The first MOU, signed in 1996, focused just on NHTs. Building on the NHT MOU, a new agreement was signed in 2001 by the BLM, NPS, Forest Service, Federal Highway Administration, and National Endowment for the Arts fostering the interests of both NHTs and NSTs. A 5-year summary report entitled *National Historic and Scenic Trails: Accomplishments 2001-2005* describes its success.[105] In 2006, an MOU enlarged in both scope and number of signatories was signed concerning the entire National Trails System, including NRTs, for a 10-year term. The current agency signatories are the:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
National Park Service (NPS)
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and
the USDA Forest Service (FS).[106]

Interagency collaboration only continued to improve. In 1999, at the invitation of BLM, the Council agencies and 13 nonprofit trail organizations joined together to form the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP). Funded by the Federal Highway Administration and led by American Trails, the NTTP network aspires to be an information clearinghouse for trail-related training nationwide. Its website provides a continuously updated calendar of upcoming training events and opportunities as well as in-depth technical information about trails of all types.[107]

As the 1990s drew to a close, the Clinton Administration sought ways to prepare for the coming Millennium. Humanities and arts agencies in the Executive Branch suggested that since trails connect Americans to their heritage, a trail recognition program would perhaps be an appropriate means for ushering in the new Millennium and its rich legacy of heritage. Developed in close partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Clintons launched the Millennium Trails Program in 1998 to recognize, promote and stimulate trails that "honor the past and imagine the future." Between 1998 and 2000, the White House officially recognized 16 National Millennium Trails (most already established as NSTs or NHTs), 51 state Millennium Legacy Trails, and nearly one thousand self-nominated local Millennium Trails.[108]

Inspired by the success of the Millennium Trails program and just before departing the White House in January 2001, President William J. Clinton signed Executive Order 13195, *Trails for America in the 21st Century.* This "EO" was crafted by Jeff Olson, the Millennium Trails program staff coordinator, and reviewed by the Federal Interagency Council on Trails. The EO outlines clear directives for Federal agencies that oversee trails — promoting interagency coordination — and reauthorizes the Federal Interagency Council on Trails. The timing was unfortunate since the Administration changed a few days later, and the presidency of George W. Bush chose other priorities.

In this same period, starting about 2000, a working team was formed to develop data standards for describing trail-related information. The team consisted of BLM, NPS, FS (and later FWS). Before this, every State and Federal Agency had separate data standards and graphic symbols for trails. This team produced a matrix of trail data attributes, called the Interagency Trail Data Standards (ITDS). The ITDS was based on 10 years of solid work by the USDA Forest Service working to develop universal codes and values for trail-related data. This exercise turned out to be more complex than anticipated. Since the first years of the 21st Century, the rules, policies, and management and organizational structure surrounding data systems like Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and agency enterprise architecture, have all been in constant flux. The complexity of data management developments subsequently inspired data committees of the Department of Interior to choose trails as a demonstration area — figuring that if this complexity can be sorted out for trails, it can be employed for any other type of resource-based data management.

The Bicentennial commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1803-1806 was another outstanding example of interagency collaboration related to the National Trails

President William J. Clinton. Photo: William J. Clinton Presidential Library.

System. Occurring in 2003-2006, it stands as the largest and most widespread interagency effort in the history of the National Trails System. Starting in 1993 and moving into high gear with the publication of Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage* in 1996, a variety of Federal agencies worked together to assure that the Bicentennial of this remarkable expedition would be a success. Department of the Interior leadership drew together 12 Federal agencies in 1998 to sign a Memorandum of Understanding fostering Bicentennial coordination. Ten additional agencies joined later. This agreement yielded a variety of benefits: Coast Guard boating safety programs on the rivers, an interagency map and brochure of sites on the Expedition route (coordinated by the U.S. Geological Survey), coins of Sacagawea and Lewis and Clark released by the U.S. Mint, and educational services such as the Corps of Engineers' traveling trunks with replica artifacts.[109]

Bringing all state and Federal agencies to the table in planning the commemoration was important. As the agency administrator of the Lewis and Clark NHT, NPS also launched a traveling visitor center, called the "Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future," with its accompanying "Tent of Many Voices," a spacious performance tent. NPS collaborated closely with American Indian tribal groups, giving Native America communities the opportunity to participate in telling the Lewis and Clark story, many for the first time. Their perspectives and stories of the Expedition were coordinated by the "Circle of Tribal Advisors," a consortium representing 40 tribes who participated under the authority of their respective tribal governments. "Corps II" became the centerpiece for many of the events held up and down the trail in the first years of the new millennium. In addition, NPS was also in charge of overseeing $5 million per year for Trail-related challenge cost-share projects during the Bicentennial years, 2001-2006.[110]

The National Trails System has truly filled out since 1990. The increase of interagency collaboration and the growth and sophistication of nonprofit, volunteer partner organizations has been crucial to this success, strengthening the System with a nationwide network of partners. This has been mirrored in the increased interest from Federal agencies. The Bureau of Land Management has become seriously invested in the Trails System. The USDA Forest Service has committed at least one full-time staff person to each of the trails they administer. And the National Park Service has grown in its capacity to plan, administer, and manage many of these trails. In addition, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Highway Administration have become key players in trail management and funding. During the 1990s and the New Millennium period, the Trails System moved beyond the experimental stage. It is now a 4-decade story of determination and success.

Keith Bear, of the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota, participates in a procession at Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, on Jan. 18, 2003, to help launch the Bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Photo: Stephanie Gross/ Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello.

National Recreation Trails
The designation of National Recreation Trails (NRTs) provides Federal agencies a way to recognize local and regional trails without Congressional action. Currently, there are over 1,050 NRTs nationwide as designated by either the secretary of the Interior or the secretary of Agriculture. NRTs traverse public and private lands and waters — some shorter than a mile, others are hundreds of miles long. Recreation trails are found in every landscape setting: urban, suburban, and rural. The NRTs offer a random sample of all types of trails throughout America: motorized and non-motorized, single use, multi-use, paved, and natural surface. The national nonprofit trails organization, American Trails, maintains the NRT website and data base (see www.americantrails.org\nationalrecreationtrails). A sampling of these NRTs includes:

Washington, D.C.'s Fort Circle Trail, one of the earliest NRTs, received designation in 1971. This trail links significant historic sites with lovely urban park nodes in the Nation's Capital. The fort sites are the remnant of the city's Civil War defenses. In addition, areas near many of the forts are significant to African Americans as many freed slaves moved to them during the Civil War. Fort Stevens, on Vinegar Hill, Washington's first Black settlement, is adjacent to Military Road School which was originally established to educate freed slaves.[111]

The King Range Crest NRT, a 70-mile BLM trail was also designated in 1971. It offers visitors unsurpassed experiences of northern California's natural beauty. Hikers can look upon mountain meadows, wander through old growth forests, and catch spectacular coastal views where mountains seem to rise straight out of the sea. Some segments are quite strenuous due to steep changes in elevation.

Big Dry Creek NRT near Denver, Colorado, was designated an NRT in 2003 and is an excellent example of an urban trail. This 10-mile trail travels through the center of Westminster and is used by pedestrians, wildlife enthusiasts, and commuters. Conservation of this area began in 1989. Now, close to 700 acres have been protected from development. In addition to providing visitors with an opportunity to experience nature and wildlife, this urban trail provides access to different attractions and services for both tourists and residents. The trail features a visitors center and is also home to two nesting Bald Eagles, rare in an urban setting. It also connects to a butterfly pavilion and insect center, entertainment amphitheatre and fitness/recreation center. The trail is maintained by many different volunteer efforts including re-vegetation, fish habitat development and trash removal.[112]

The 1,000th NRT was recognized June 2, 2007 (National Trails Day) to honor Rich Gaudagno, an employee of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who died in the crash of Flight 93 in Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001. Located at Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon, where Rich served as manager from 1992 to 2000, this 1.7-mile trail was chosen to be listed as the 1000th NRT. Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne, said "No other national trail designated this year has such a powerful message. Its selection connects us all with our American conservation and outdoor traditions."[113]

The Rich Guadagno Memorial NRT is officially opened. From left to right: Ren Lohoefner, USFWS Pacific Region Director, Deputy Secretary of the Interior, Lynn Scarlett, Lori Guadagno, Rich's sister, Pam Gluck, Executive Director of American Trails, and Doug Spencer, Project Leader for the Willamette Vally, National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Photo: USFWS.

A Decade for the National Trails 2008-2018

But this is merely a backbone system . . . I think probably in terms of actual daily use of people these local trails, city trails, county trails are going to be more important than the Federal system. We are trying to put this in focus by this legislation. We are trying to put in a backbone system. And we are trying also to encourage action at the local level.[114]

The success of the National Trails System Act (NTSA) so far indicates that the National Trails System is likely here to stay. Simultaneous to the writing of this history on the National Trails System, preparations are underway to make the decade between the 40th and 50th anniversaries of the passage of the NTSA into "A Decade for the National Trails."

The System in its variety and richness of resources has far exceeded the vision of its earliest proponents, and gone beyond an experiment. Within four decades, the public image of a national trail has broadened from a few mountain trails for backcountry backpacking to include historical commemoration, Native American travelways, and water trails. A converging of natural and cultural resource conservation has meant that trail-wide inventories now include both, since understanding the imprint of mankind together with the natural setting is essential to appreciating each of the National Trails. At the same time, thousands of volunteers have come forth to make these trails a reality for all Americans (and their international visitors) to enjoy and cherish.

The trails system should — and will — continue to improve. In 2007, building on the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP) network, BLM (again with FHWA funding) helped craft a needs assessment to focus on skills necessary for the improvement of National Trails System components. Skill building and the replacement of experienced retiring senior staff will be an important challenge in this next phase of the National Trails System.

This Decade for the National Trails offers a host of opportunities to consolidate this collection of long-distance trails into a true system by:

- Adding more trails that meet the National Trails System Act criteria,
- Tightening up the Act so that it withstands the predicted challenges of the future, and
- Raising support and awareness for the trails individually — as well as for the entire National Trails System — so that they increase in relevance and value to all Americans.

After all, these trails do not merely represent the unique natural landscapes and cultural heritage of our history. They represent the making of a nationwide system of trails that has now become itself a part of American history. It is the right of each citizen to know this heritage and participate in its preservation and use.

[Trails] promise the best opportunity yet devised for bringing people into intimate contact with nature and the unspoiled out-of-doors in both wildernesses and also in the relatively developed settings ... Trails are the most important, the most economical, and the easiest means of providing desirable human access to areas of historic significance, our publicly owned wilderness lands, and areas of scenic beauty. [115]

Endnotes

The author wishes the acknowledge the very helpful review comments provided by his invaluable colleagues Sharon Brown, Tom Gilbert, Ed Talone, Helen Scully, and Gary Werner.

This publication was edited and designed by GREATgraphics!

This historical account is a first pass, missing many important and supportive people, events, and documents. If you wish to contribute missing pieces (including photos) to a future edition of this history, please contact the author at steve_elkinton@nps.gov.

Introduction

1 Stewart Udall in testimony, March 6, 1967, in GPO, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation... on HR 4865 and Related Bills To Establish a Nationwide System of Trails, March 6-7, 1967, Serial No. 09-4, p. 23.

2 National Trail System Act, 16 U.S.C. 1242(a)(2).

3 *Ibid.*, 1242(a)(3). The Roots of the National Trails System

4 The National Park Service (NPS) administers 5 NSTs and 13 NHTs. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers the Iditarod NHT in Alaska, and co-administers with NPS El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and the Old Spanish NHTs. The USDA Forest Service administers the Pacific Crest, Continental Divide, and Florida NSTs, and the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) NHT.

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7 History link article, Ezra Meeker. http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=7757.

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19 Laurance S. Rockefeller, chair, 1962, Outdoor Recreation for America: A report to the President and Congress by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission.

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Abbreviations used in these Notes:

FAQ = Frequently Asked Questions (usually a website subsection)

GPO = Government Printing Office

NARA = National Archives and Records Administration

NHT = National Historic Trail

NST = National Scenic Trail

NTSAHA = National Trails System Administrative History Archive, located at 1201 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005

RG = Record Group

U.S.C. = United State Code

21 *The Washington Post, Times Herald.* "Eager Mrs. Johnson Feels Free as a Bird Outdoors," Apr 16, 1967, pg. H12. Accessed online through ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

22 See Washington State Historical Society online article, "Following in Their Footsteps: Creating the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail" (2002) at: http://www.wshs.org/wshs/columbia/articles/0202-a4.htm

23 From "Means of Perpetuating the Appalachian Trail" *Appalachian Trailway News* vol. 6, no 2, pg 1.

24 United States Senate, 1965, Senate reports S 622 and S 2590.

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29 GPO, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation ... on HR 4865 and Related Bills To Establish a Nationwide System of Trails, March 6-7, 1967, Serial No. 09-4.

30 GPO, 1967, Hearings Before the [Senate] Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ... on S. 827, A Bill to Establish a Nationwide System of Trails and for Other Purposes, March 15 and 16, 1967.

31 Two participants in the hearings were to play leading roles later: One skeptical member of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, James A. McClure (R-ID), was later elected in 1972 to the Senate where he chaired the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources from 1981 to 1987 and was largely responsible for the later NTSA Section 10(c) funding restrictions. The letter from the American Farm Bureau Federation was signed by Craig L. Thomas, AFB Assistant Legislative Director, who was elected to the House in 1989 (R-WY) and the Senate in 1995 (R-WY, succeeding Dick Cheney). He played key roles in trails legislation from 2000 until his death in 2007.

32 U.S. House of Representatives, 90th Congress, 2nd Session, Conference Report: Nationwide System of Trails, Report 1891.

33 Glenn Scherer, 2002, *America's National Trails: Journeys Across Land and Time*, Guilford, CT: Falcon Press, pp. 62-65.

34 *Washington Post Times Herald.* "Historic Foursome," Sep 26, 1968, Washington Post, pg. A20. Accessed online through ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

The First Decade, 1968-1978

35 Spencer M. Smith, 1967, for the Citizens Committee on Natural Resources, GPO, Hearings Before the [Senate] Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ... on S. 827, A Bill to Establish a Nationwide System of Trails and for Other Purposes, March 15 and 16, 1967, p. 151.

36 Stewart Udall to Gov. Albert P. Brewer, Alabama, Nov. 15, 1968, in NTSAHA.

37 *Federal Register*, Sept. 12, 1969, Vol. 34. No. 175, p. 14337.

38 For more information on Russell E. Train, see: "Biographical Sketch of Russell E. Train" in the Nomination of Russell E. Train to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Hearing before the U.S. Senate Committee on Public Works, August 1, 1973. and Train, Russell E. Politics, Pollution, and Pandas: An Environmental Memoir. Washington: Island Press/ Shearwater Books, 2003.

39 *Proceedings: National Symposium on Trails,* Washington D.C., June 2-6, 1971.

40 *Ibid.*

41 Proceedings for the Second National Symposium on Trails, held June 14-17, 1973, Colorado Springs, CO, p. 60, in NTSAHA.

42 *Ibid.*, Appendix, p. iii.

43 *Ibid.*, p. ii.

44 Since about 1980 these meetings have only tangentially addressed issues associated with the NSTs and NHTs. They focus most on local trails and recreation facilities. One result is that NST and NHT advocates started their own conferences in 1988.

45 Agreement between the USDA and US DOI for the development and operation of the National Trails System, Federal Interagency Council on Trails, 1969-2000 file, NTS files, and Federal Regional Working Groups on Trails Criteria, March 1974, NTSAHA.

46 http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=59095&st=&st1 .

47 "Creating a National Data Set for Bureau of Land Management National Landscape Conservation System" by Holly Hampton, http://gis2.esri.com/library/userconf/feduco5/docs/pap131.pdf.

48 The National Trails Council had been organized just after the 1971 Symposium, but with just the sole mission of organizing those biennial meetings.

49 President Jimmy Carter, May 23, 1977, The Environment Message to Congress, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7561&st=&st1.

50 Cecil D. Andrus to Walter F. Mondale, President of the Senate, May 26, 1977, in NTSAHA.

51 For more information, visit: Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appalachian_Trail#_note-13 and the ATC website, http://www.appalachiantrail.org/site/c.jkLXJ8MQKtH/b.851143/k.C36D/2000Milers_Facts_and_Statistics.htm

52 U.S. Senate, 1978, Publ. 95-126, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation . . . , May 1, 1978.

53 *Building the World, An Encyclopedia of the Great Engineering Projects in History*, p. 645 in www.buildingtheworld.com.

54 National Park Service website, History of the Oregon Trail, http://www.gov.oreg.

55 Scherer, 2002, pp. 38-39.

56 Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Correspondence Files, RG 368, box 13, NARA (Greenbelt).

57 *Ibid.*

58 National Park Service website for the Lewis and Clark NHT, http://www.nps.gov/lecl/.

59 Scherer, pp. 54-56.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

Building the System, 1978-1990

61 Rep. Joe Skubitz, R-KS, in March 6, 1967, in GPO, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation... on HR 4865 and Related Bills To Establish a Nationwide System of Trails, March 6-7, 1967, Serial No. 09-4, p. 43.

62 Federal Register, April 19, 1979, Vol. 44, No. 77, p 23384.

63 Karotko, Robert, 5/8/2008, e-mail message.

64 Congressional Record, Sept. 22, 1980, p. 26465.

65 *Ibid.*

66 North Country Trail Association website, history: http://www.northcountrytrail.org/ncta/about.htm.

67 Scherer, pp. 10-12.

68 The Overmountain Victory Trail Association website, http://www.ovta.org/.

69 Ice Age National Park and Trail Foundation website, FAQ: http://www.iceagetrail.org/faqs.htm.

70 Scherer, pp. 14-17.

71 Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, Plan your visit http://www.nps.gov/pohe/planyourvisit/index.htm.

72 Scherer, pp. 18-21.

73 Florida Trail Association website, History: http://www.floridatrail.org/web/index.php?module=pagemaster&PAGE_user_op=view_page&PAGE_id=5&MMN_position=22:22.

74 National Park Service, 1990, Trails for All Americans, p. 1.

75 Scherer, pp. 50-52.

76 Nez Perce Trail Foundation website, http://www.nezpercetrail.net/foundation.htm.

77 NPS Santa Fe Trail website, history and culture section, http://www.nps.gov/safe/historyculture/index.htm.

78 Santa Fe Trail Association website, http://www.santafetrail.org/.

79 *Ibid.*

80 NPS Trail of Tears website, history and culture, http://www.nps.gov/trte/historyculture/index.htm.

81 Trail of Tears Association website, mission statement, http://www.nationaltota.org/.

82 Cherokee Heritage Center, Trail of Tears Exhibit. http://www.cherokeeheritage.org/Default.aspx?tabid=272.

83 Amigos de Anza website, trail history http://www.therapure.com/anza-trail/anza-men.htm.

84 Scherer, pp. 6-9.

85 Karotko, Robert, 5/8/2008, e-mail message.

86 Air Line Rail Trail, History. http://pages.cthome.net/mbartel/ARRhome.htm.

87 An Action Plan for Creating an Interconnected Network of Trails Across America: report on a Conference Held October, 1986, at Rensselaerville Institute, NTSAHA.

88 *Trails for All Americans,* p. 1, NTSAHA.

Maturation of the System, 1990-2008

89 Edward P. Cliff, Chief USDA Forest Service, March 6, 1967, in GPO, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation... on HR 4865 and Related Bills to Establish a Nationwide System of Trails, March 6-7, 1967, Serial No. 09-4, p. 58.

90 Although the Pacific Northwest Trail was not at this time part of the National Trails System, its coordinating nonprofit, the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, hosted this conference to promote the trail for possible inclusion in the System in future years.

91 BLM, 2006, *National Scenic and Historic Trail Strategy and Work Plan.*

92 Federal Register, Vol. 64, No. 71, April 14, 1999, p. 18444, and Vol. 65, No. 60, March 28, 2000, pp. 16412-16418.

93 Scherer, pp. 42-45.

94 *Ibid.*, pp. 46-49.

95 National Pony Express Association website, 2007 re-ride, http://www.xphomestation.com/2007-reride.html.

96 NPS website, www.nps.gov/semo/historyculture and U.S. Department of Justice, Introduction to Federal Voting Rights Laws, www.usdoj.goc/crt/voting/intro/intro_b.htm.

97 NPS Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail website, Planning your visit http://www.nps.gov/semo/planyourvisit/things2do.htm.

98 NPS El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro website, http://www.nps.gov/elca/historyculture/index.htm.

99 El Camino Real International Heritage Center, http://www.caminorealheritage.org/view/index.php?XID=about&language=english (no longer working).

100 NPS Ala Kahakai NHT, http://www.nps.gov/alka/.

101 U.S. Senate, Senator Daniel K Akaka, speech to President introducing the Trail. http://akaka.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=speeches.home&month=3&year=1999&release_id=1243.

102 Old Spanish Trail Association website, http://www.oldspanishtrail.org/explore.php.

103 NPS El Camino Real de Los Tejas, History and Culture http://www.nps.gov/elte/historyculture/index.htm.

104 NPS Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Website, http://www.nps.gov/cajo and Friends of the Captain John Smith Water Trail, Vision for the Trail, http://www.friendsofthejohnsmithtrail.org/vision.html.

105 BLM, FHWA, NEA, NPS, and USDA-FS, 2006, National Historic and Scenic Trails: Accomplishments 2001-2005, NTSAHA.

106 http://www.nps.gov/nts/memorandum2006.html.

107 www.nttp.net.

108 http://clinton2.nara.gov/Initiatives/Millennium/trails.html.

109 The official commemorative coin was a silver dollar of Lewis and Clark (authorized by Public law 106-126). Related coins included: a golden dollar of Sacagawea minted in 1997 as part of the 10-year circulating commemorative coin program to commemorate each of the 50 States (Pub.L. 105-124); a redesigned Jefferson nickel, with one new design similar to the Jefferson Peace Medal commissioned for the Lewis and Clark expedition, which Lewis and Clark handed out as tokens of goodwill to American Indians along their route ("Westward Journey Nickel Series").

110 To see photos of the cost-share projects, visit the photo album of NPS at: http://www.nps.gov/lecl/parkmgmt/ccsp-photoalbum.htm

111 American Trails, National Recreation Trail website for the Fort Circle Park, http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/trailNRT/FortCircle-DC.html.

112 Big Dry Creek Trail, Westminster Colorado. American Trails National Recreation Trails Program. http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/trailNRT/BigDryWestmin-CO.html.

113 U.S. Department of the Interior, June 2007, press release.

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114 Interior Secretary Stewart Udall in GPO, 1967, Hearings Before the [Senate] Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs ... on S. 827, A Bill to Establish a Nationwide System of Trails and for Other Purposes, March 15 and 16, 1967, p. 43.

115 Stewart W. Brandborg, Executive Director, The Wilderness Society, GPO, 1967, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation.... on H.R. 4865 and Related Bills to Establish a Nationwide System of Trails, held March 6-7, 1967, p. 147.

Florida Trail Association staff and volunteers join NPS Director Fran Mainella in 2006 along the Florida NST. Photo: Florida Trail Association.

Hikers enjoying fresh snow on the North Country NST, Michigan. Photo: North Country Trail Association.

2008~2018
NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM
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